

Meetness
FOR
HEAVEN

Promoted in some brief
MEDITATIONS
UPON

COLOS. 1. 12.

Discovering the nature and necessity of habitual and actual Meetness for Heaven here, in all that hope for Heaven hereafter.

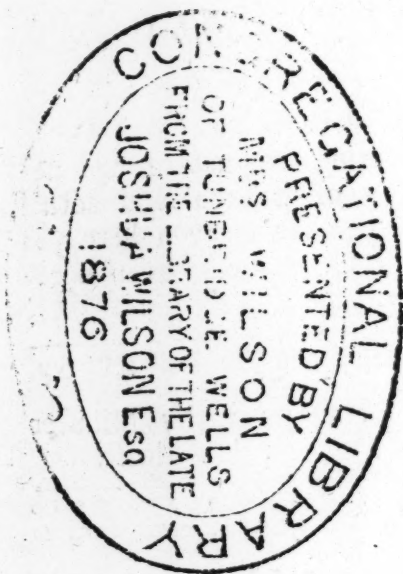
Designed for a Funeral Legacy.

Printed by O. H.
By O. H. an unworthy Minister
of the Gospel of Christ.

Psal. 73. 24. Thou shalt guide me with thy Counsel, and afterward received me to Glory.

Rev. 22. 14. Blessed are they that do his Commandments that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the City.

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A N

EPISTLE

To my Dearly Beloved Hear-
ers, Friends and Neigh-
bours, and others that will
be at the cost to buy, or
take the pains to read this
small Treatise,

Dearly Beloved,

A Desire after Happiness is so
ingraven in the Nature of
Man, that it was neuer put to the
debate, whether he would be happy
or no? This needs no choice; all
are agreed in this as the end of a
rational Agent: And therefore at

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last Felicity was accounted a Goddess among the Romans, and St. Augustine tells us, that Lucullus built her a Temple; only he wonders that the Romans that were worshippers of so many Gods, had not given Divine Honour to Felicity sooner; which alone would have sufficed in stead of all the rest of their Deities, which he reckons up, and saith at last of Numa, that having chosen so many Gods and Goddesses, 'tis strange he neglected this; [An eam forte in tanta turbâ videre non potuit?] but though they at last had got a notion of Felicity, yet having no true Piety, that veneration ended in the greatest misery and infelicity, nothing but Wars ensued. Vid. Aug. de civit. Dei, lib 4. cap. 23.

This indeed is the case: All men would be happy, but few know the due object and true means leading to Happiness; It is possible (as the same

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same Father saith there) to find a man that is unwilling to be made King; [nullus autem invenitur, qui se nolit esse foelicem] that is, loath to be made happy : But indeed most men blunder in the dark, and few find the thing they seek : The same Father tells us, (de civ. Dei, lib 19. c. 1.) that Varro in his Book of Philosophy, that had diligently searched the various Opinions of men about the chiefest good, reduceth them to two hundred eighty eight Sects or Sentences ; [non quæ jam essent, sed quæ esse possent ?] and Augustine reduceth them to their severall heads : But I pass by Heathens that are bewildred in the dark, and know no better : Even professing or pretended Christians either do not understand, or will not embrace the way of Peace and Rest. The Lord looked down from Heaven upon the Children of Men, to see if there were any

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that did understand and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are altogether become filthy, there is none that doth good, no not one. Psal. 14. 2, 3. *All mankind is degenerate; and few are regenerated: We set out for Hell as soon as we are born; and till converting Grace turn us Heaven-wards we go blindfold to the pit: The whole World lyeth in ignorance and wickedness.* 1 Joh. 5. 19. *But no such ignorance as that which is wilful.* This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil; Joh. 3. 19. *No man perisheth but by his own will. Men will sin, and love death rather than life. You will not come to me, (saith Christ) that you may have life.* Joh. 5. 40. *He that rejecteth the means, rejecteth the end: All they that hate Christ, love death:* Prov.

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Prov. 8. 36. *They do both, not directly, or designedly, but interpretatively, and consequentially. Most men observe lying vanities, and so forsake their own Mercies. Jon. 2. 8. as he leaves the East that goes to the West : My people, saith God, have committed two evils, [Observe it ; it's but one act, yet there's two evils in it, what are they ?] they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. Jer. 2. 13. Oh what evil is in the bowels of one sin ! But especially in the sin of Unbelief. The evil of sin brings on the evil of punishment. Miss of Heaven, and you purchase Hell. What mad man will refuse this gift that is better then Gold ? What beast will run into a pit or precipice ? But some men make a jest of Heaven ; as that Bishop, who, when one said, I hope to see*

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you at your Diocess ere long ; re-
plyed, I fear I shall be in Heaven
before that time come : Others,
like Martha, are so incumbred in
the World, that they are staked
down to Terrene Objects ; and An-
swer, as he that being asked, if he
saw the Eclipse, answered, No, I
have so much business on Earth,
that I have no leisure to look up
to Heaven : This is most mens
case. Alas, the World eats out
many mens Religion, as the Sun
shining eats out the fire : So that
men are as dead to Religion, as if
Heaven were but a dream ; and as
hot upon sin, as if Hell had no
fire, or were all vanisht into smoke :
Nay, it's well, if some look not on
Heaven and Hell, as if they were
but a Fable or Romance, a scar-
crow to fright weak-headed people,
or the meer invention of designing
Priests to keep men in awe : But
they shall know one day to their cost,
that

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that there is an Heaven by the loss of it, and that there is an Hell by the torments of it : Let these ask the rich man in torment, whether there is an Hell or no ? Targum saith, the dispute betwixt Cain and Abel was, concerning a World to come : And indeed this is the Controversie betwixt the faithful and unbelievers : Though the wicked say the Creed, wherein they profess a belief of the Resurrection, Judgment, and Eternal Life ; yet its but notional, not experimental, practical : They know nothing of it initially, inchoatively, by feeling the beginnings of it here, and living to the rates of it : It is to be feared that the greatest part of Mankind will fall to the Devils share : How little are men concerned about a future state ! How many put away from them the evil day ! Some have a foolish imagination that Heaven is every where ; that there is nei-

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ther Heaven nor Hell but in a mans own Conscience, and then they can shift well enough ; for they can stop the mouth of a bawling Conscience, and speak Peace to themselves : But how long will either of these last ? When God arms a man against himself, he shall be a Magormissabib, a fear round about : Witness Cain, Saul, Judas, that thought Hell was easier then his own Conscience, and therefore desperately leapt into it ; to the crushing of his Body, and the damning of his Soul : They shall find that there is an Heaven and Hell after this natural Life is ended. It is recorded of Peter Martyr, that he lying upon his Death-bed discoursed sweetly of Heaven ; Bullinger standing by alleadged that in Phil. 3. 20. Our Conversation is in Heaven : True, said the sick man, it is in Heaven, [sed non in Coelo Brentii, quod nusquam est,] not in the Heaven of

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of Brentius ; which is no where :
There is doubtless a [Coelum Em-
pyreum,] called a Third Heaven,
or Paradice, into which Paul was
wrapt in his Extacy, 2 Cor. 12.
2, 4. into which Christ was carry-
ed Body and Soul, Luke 24. 51.
The habitation of Gods Holiness
and Glory, Isa. 63. 15. Its true
God himself is called Heaven, Dan.
4. 26. The Heavens do rule. So
Matth. 21. 25. And its as true,
God fills Heaven and Earth, Jer.
23. 24. And its true, where the
King is there is the Court : But
yet God manifests himself far dif-
ferently in all places ; he is in Hell
by the execution of his Justice, in
Heaven by manifestation of his
Grace, on Earth by displaying both,
and his other Glorious Attributes,
according to his infinite Wisdom and
Pleasure.

But let Vain Men please them-
selves in their fond conceits ; or
des-

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desperately leap into the other World; let you and me duely weigh the vast difference betwixt Graceless and Gracious Souls in this and in the other World, and though men will not believe, because they see not any such difference; yet a time is coming, when they shall return and discern betwixt the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not. Mal. 3. 18. Then all the World must be ranked into two Regiments, sheep and goats; the one at Christs right hand, the other on his left; to the one he will say, come ye blessed, to the other go ye cursed. Mat. 25. 32—46. They that love not to hear discriminating Truths here, shall meet with discriminating Acts at that day: And can we think that there will be such a difference at that day, and is there none in this World? Yes certainly: Though all things come
come

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come alike to all, as to common Providences in this World, Eccles. 9. 2. yet Grace makes a difference in Persons dispositions here, and there will be a vast difference in Divine Dispensations hereafter, much greater then betwixt a Man and a Brute; yea, like that which is betwixt an Angel and a Devil. Oh that men would study and understand this now! Grace makes the difference now, and Glory compleats it.

1. In point of Assimilation: Gods Children are like their Father now, but shall be more like him at that day; 1 Joh. 3. 2. Our former similitude is from Faith, and so imperfect; but the latter is from immediate Vision, and so perfect and compleat.

2. In point of Satisfaction: In this World the weary Soul is working towards its rest, Psal. 116. 7. and doth by Faith enter into this rest;

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rest; Heb. 4. 3. yet there is another remaining, ver. 9. Some satisfaction is in Ordinances, Psal. 36. 8. but more in that Blessed Morning, when Gods Children awake, Psal. 17. 15.

3. In point of Participation : For Gods Children are not tantalized, by beholding that they have no right to; no, they have Heaven by appropriation by Faith here, so Eph. 2. 8. and by compleat possession in the other World; abundant evidence of peculiar relation, Rev. 21. 3.

4. In point of Fruition : Gods Children do enjoy fellowship with God already in this world; 1 Joh. 1. 3. but alas, it is but through a glass darkly, but then face to face immediately; 1 Cor. 13. 12. Now it is but rarely, but now and then, but then constantly and perpetually, as the Angels that always behold the face of our Father. Matth. 18. 10. Their Eye is never.

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ver off God, even when they are sent on any Errands to Earth about the Saints : Its defective in degree here, but full and compleat above : Its oft obstructed and obscured here, but above this Glory shall be revealed in us, Rom. 8. 18. and so never darkened or eclipsed with clouds of interposing guilt.

O ye Children of men, prove your Fathers will, and your selves Children ; make sure of this Inheritance ; make no reckoning of the stuff of this World ; for the good of the upper Country above is before you ; Heaven will pay for all your losses, and countervail all your crosses here : No matter how your Names are written on Earth, in Dust or Marble, if they be written in Heaven. Some say this World is but a shadow of that above ; look you for the lineaments of that Kingdom above, to be pourtrayed on you. Basil asserted One Hundred Sixty
Five

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Five Heavens. You must pass by all the fancied Heavens of Men, and look for a City that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Heb. 11. 10. Take this Kingdom of Heaven by violence. Matth. 11. 12. Get a Copy of Grace in your hearts out of Scripture Records, the Court Rolls of Heaven; so you are sure of it, and lay hold of Eternal Life. 1 Tim. 6. 19. Heaven must be begun here, or never enjoyed hereafter. Holiness of Heart and Life is like the Old Testament Tabernacle, an example and shadow of heavenly things. Happiness is the enjoyment of good, commensurate to our desires; and our desires must be suited to that happiness. Criticks observe, that the word [אַשְׁרַי] which signifies happiness, is plural; not only denoting a confluence of many good things to make one happy, but because there is an happiness in this

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this life, preparing for and anticipating the happiness in the other. They differ not in kind but degree; that above is the same state, but in an higher stature; the same Book but in a more correct Edition, and a larger Character. The Saints above differ from us as Man from a Child, as Noon sun from the Morning light; we are in the same house, only they are got into the upper room; at the same feast only they are at the upper end of the Table. Let us make hast after them: They were once as you are, groveling on this Dung-hill, but are exalted to the Throne; aspire you to the same preferment: It may be had, it must be had or you are undone: Study the way of God, how this Inheritance is made over to the Sons of Men, and that is, 1. By Regeneration. Matth. 19. 28.
2. By Adoption. Romans 8. 17.
3. By Donation. Luke 12. 32.
4. By

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4. *By right of Redemption.* Joh. 10. 28. Eph. 1. 14. and they say, he that hath bought a Slave may dispose of him as he please, by his will : Our Lord made his will thus, Joh. 17. 24. Father, I will that where I am these may be also. Clear this and clear all, then you are safe ; fail in this and you are undone.

But this is not all ; you are not only to get and clear up a title to this Inheritance, but to press after a due meetness for it ; and this is the design of this small Treatise, which was (for the substance of it) Preached and Writ Thirty Five Years ago, and now revised and published upon these Considerations.

1. For my own help and furtherance in preparation for Heaven, having passed to the sixtieth year of my Life, (the date of the Life of Paul the aged) within a few days ; and my Lord only knows how soon

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soon my sun may set, though I cannot say, my Natural Vigour either of Body or Mind is in the least abated; but I am mortal, and am loath to be surprized unawares.

2. I see a great failure in my self and other Christians in this, that terminate our studies and endeavours in getting a title, and then think all is well, we need no more; but surely there is much behind; we have abundance of work upon our hands for obtaining actual meetness, without which we cannot evidence our habitual meetness.

3. I never yet met with any Treatise upon this subject, though it be of great importance for every Christian; surely Heaven is worth minding, and methinks Abrahams Query in another case should be ours, Gen. 15. 8. O Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?

4. I have observed a commendable

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able practice of some Christians ; which is, to order some Books to be distributed at their Funerals : The first that I knew of that nature was Mr. R. A. his Vindiciæ Pietatis, and some other practical pieces, which by Gods Blessing have done much good : Such a Memorandum would I bequeath as my last Legacy to you, my dear People, amongst whom I have laboured above thirty nine years in publick and private, serving the Lord in some measure of Integrity and Humility, with many Tears and Temptations, through variety of Dispensations, Excommunications, Banishments, Consecrations and Imprisonments ; but out of all these the Lord hath delivered me, and set my feet in a large place, and God that searcheth the heart knows what hath been my design in studying, preaching, praying, preparing you a place to meet in to Worship God ; and what are the
the

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the agonies and jealousies of my Spirit to this day, ~~least~~ I leave any of you unconverted, and so cashiered from Gods presence at the great day; and now at last I solemnly charge you before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect Angels, that you rest not in a graceless state another day, lest that be the last day, and you be found unready: And I solemnly require you that have a principle of Grace, gird up your Loins, trim your Lamps, and observe these few Rules, and the dispositions mentioned in this small Treatise: I only hint further; Be much in the love of God: Dayly act Faith on Christ: Walk in the Spirit: Design Gods Glory: Intermit not holy duties: Be not content therein without communion with God: Mingle Religion with civil acts: Increase every Grace: Redeem time: Profitably converse with Gods Children: Aim at perfection: Maintain tender Consciences: Keep
strict

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*strict accounts: Study the life of Heaven: Be still doing or getting good: Set God before your eyes: Trample on worldly things: Live in dayly view of death: Be nothing in your own eyes: Be much in heavenly praises: Say, O Lord, who am I, and what is my Fathers house, that thou hast brought me hitherto? What is man, what am I, the least and worst of the children of men, that the heart of God should be working for me, and towards me, in infinite bowels of eternal love! That the Lord Jesus should shed his heart-blood for me! That the holy Spirit should take possession of me! That God should provide such an inheritance for me! Assure me of it by precious Promises, seal it to me in his holy Supper! That ever God should give me an heart to fear him: Heal so many backslidings: Prevent total Apostacy: Pardon all my iniquities: Vouchsafe me such large priviledges: Supply
my*

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my wants: Hear my Prayers: Help me over so many a foul place in my journey : Brought me to the borders of *Canaan* : Given me so many foretasts of the promised Land : Tells me the Jordan of death shall be driven back, and give me a safe passage to Heaven : O Blessed, blessed be God, all this is from sovereign Grace : God doth what he pleaseth: I would not exchange this hope for the worlds possessions : Eternity will be little enough to be taken up in the praises of rich grace. *Thus the gracious Soul may quickly lose it self in these Divine Praises and Contemplations, as that zealous German Martyr, Giles Titleman, who in his Prayers was so ardent, kneeling by himself in some secret place, that he seemed to forget himself, being called many times to meat ; he neither heard nor saw them that stood by him, till he was lift up by the Arms, and then gently he would speak to them as one waked out of*

of a deep sleep: Oh that there were
such a spirit in Gods children! That
our hearts were so intent on things
above, as to pass through the world as
unconcerned in it! Then shall you be
content to leave all, and go to Christ!
Then will you not be afraid of the
King of Terrors, though armed with
Halberts, Racks, Fires, Gibbets; then
will you have a brighter Crown, and
higher degrees of Glory, and shall
shine as the brightness of the Firma-
ment, and as one Star differs from a-
nother in Glory, so you will be set in
the highest Orb; and having had
largest capacities on Earth, shall have
fullest joys in Heaven: I will con-
clude with the blessed Apostles Prayer
1 Th. 3. 12, 13. The Lord make
you to increase and abound in love
one towards another, and towards
all men, even as we do towards
you; to the end he may stablish
your hearts unblameable in holi-
ness before God, even our Father, at
the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ
with all his Saints: Amen and Amen,
Thus prayeth

Your Servant in our dearest Lord,

Oliuer Heywood.

COLOS. I. 12.

*Giving thanks unto the Father,
which hath made us meet to
be partakers of the inheri-
tance of the Saints in light.*

C H A P. I.

*The Text opened; Doctrines raised
and explained.*

PRayer and Praise are the two wings upon which a devout Soul mounts Heavenwards : Prayer fetcheth down occasions of Praise : These two are as Chariots and Factors to maintain intercourse betwixt God and his Children. *Paul* was a great man in both, for after the

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Inscription, Subscription and Benediction in this Epistle, he falls to Praise, *ver.* 3. then to Prayer, *ver.* 9. and in the Text he falls again to Praise and Thanksgiving; wherein observe,

1. *The Duty, Praise.*
2. *The Mercy for what.*

In the former observe,

1. *The Act, giving thanks.*
2. *The Object, the Father.*

1. The Act, *Εὐχαριστεῖς* : It signifies a being of a good Grace, having a very grateful Spirit, and expressing it in words and actions. *Col.* 3. 15 *Be ye thankful; or be ye amiable one to another, or grateful, both in conferring and receiving Benefits : But here it refers to God.*

Obs. 1.

Meetness for Heaven. 3

Obs. 1. *That thankfulness is the duty and property of a Christian.*

Thankful retribution for Mercies is the study and enquiry of gracious Souls; *Psal.* 116. 12. Prayer and Thanks are like the double motion of the Lungs; the air of Mercy that is sucked in by Prayer is breathed out again by the duty of Praise. O happy Christian that can and must *in every thing give thanks!* *1 Th.* 5. 18. This is, (*Christianorum propria virtus*) saith *Hierom*, a practice proper to Christians, to be heartily thankful for crosses, as *Job* was *ch.* 1. 21.

2. Here is the object of this Thankfulness, that is God, under the notion and relation of a Father: God imports Glory and Majesty; Father signifies Mercy, Love and Clemency.

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Doct. 2. *It becomes Christians to approach to God as an indulgent Father.*

Oh how much sweetness and endearedness is in this word *Father*, therefore Christ teacheth us to begin our Prayers with [*Our Father*] ; this relation quickens our Faith, and engageth Gods Love, Bowels; his care, power, and all for his Children, *Matth.* 6. 32. There's comfort in a Father, much more in an Heavenly Father : Evil men may be good Fathers, *Mat.* 7. 11. how much more will a good God be a good Father ; [*Tam Pater nemo, tam pius nemo*] none can be so good, and so much a Father as he.

2. The matter and ground of Thankfulness refers to God the Fathers care and kindness to all his Children : This is twofold.

1. *Pro-*

Meetness for Heaven. 5

1. *Providing for them an inheritance.*

2. *Preparing them for it.*

1. Providing for all his Children an inheritance ; Wherein are considerable four things ;

1. *The nature of Heaven, inheritance.*

2. *The quality of it, in light.*

3. *The Inhabitants, Saints.*

4. *Their right to it, partakers.*

A word of every of these.

1. The nature of this Cœlestial Glory ; it is called an inheritance, partly alluding to *Israels* possessing the Land of *Canaan* ; partly to signifie that it is not given us for our Merits, but by his Free-grace and Mercy, therefore called the *Reward of the Inheritance*, Col.

3. 24. because it is conveyed as by a Father to his Child, of bounty, and not earned as wages by a Servant, due from his Master.

6 Meekness for Heaven.

Doct. 3. *God as a Father gives Heaven as an inheritance to his Children.*

All Gods Children are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. Rom. 8. 17. Oh happy Souls that are heirs to such an inheritance !

2. The property or quality of this inheritance ; its in Light : Which is meant, (1.) Of the light of Truth or Faith ; or that Gospel-light whereby Gods Children are savingly enlightened : Or, (2.) Of Light of glory, where there is perfect Light and Delight, Joy and Felicity, for God dwelleth in inaccessible Light. 1 Tim. 6. 16.

Doct 4. *Heaven is a place and state of unexpressible Light.*

Rev. 21. 23. *And the City had*

Mistress for Heaven. 7

no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon to shine in it, for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

3. Here is the proprietors, the owners of this glorious inheritance ; i. e. Saints, sanctified souls ; its purchased for them, vouchsafed to them only ; others have nothing to do with it ; no dirty dogs or filthy swine shall trample on this golden pavement. 1 Cor. 6. 9. Rev. 21. 27.

Doct. 5. *Only Saints (or sanctified souls) are heirs of Heaven.*

Without holiness no man shall see God, Heb. 12. 14 No grace no glory. The inhabitants of that City are called, yea, are really holy. Isa. 43. 4.

4. But how come they by this high Honour ? Have they a good Title to it ? *Answ.* Yes, they are

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partakers of it ; so saith the Text, [*Εἰς τὴν μερίδα τῆς κλήρου*] Either that which falls to them by lot ; then it is the decision of Heaven ; these are joyned : *Acts* 8. 21. Or else by a persons own choice, *which* (our Lord saith) *shall not be taken away.* *Luke* 10. 42.

Doct. 6. *Every Saint of God is already partaker of an Heavenly Inheritance.*

The promise, (or the Mercy promised) is sure to all the seed, Rom. 4. 16. Why so ? Because it is by Grace on Gods part, and by Faith on our part : And God will have it so of his good pleasure.

A sincere Christian partakes of Heaven.

1. *In Pretio.*] In purchase : The price is laid down for it ; *its a purchased possession, Eph.* 1. 14.

2. *In Promisso.*] *Its theirs by*
pro-

Meetness for Heaven. 9

promise, as *Canaan* was *Israels* by promise ; and that Land of Promise was a Type of this Heavenly Inheritance. *Jam.* 1. 11.

3. *In capite.*] Saints partake of Heaven by their union to their Head who is in Heaven ; *Eph.* 2. 6. — *And hath made us sit together in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* Oh happy Souls !

4. *In primitiis.*] In the first-fruits or earnest ; *2 Cor.* 5. 5. — *Who hath also given unto us the earnest of his Spirit.* [*Pignus redditur, Arrha retinetur.*] A pledge is restored, but an earnest is retained, because its part of the bargain. A faithful Man will not run back from his bargain, nor lose his earnest : Nor will the Covenant-keeping God : He is faithful who hath promised, who will also do it.

2. The other part of the Text in the second branch, is not only

B 5

pro-

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providing an inheritance for his Children, but preparing them for that inheritance. *Solomon* saith, *Wisdom is good with an inheritance. Eccl. 7. 11.* Alas, what should a Fool do with a great Estate? Yet it often falls out so, that worst Men have most of the World: But, saith *Mr. Jo. Dalles* on this Text; "It is not so here as in worldly things, that fall into the hands of those that are most incapable to improve them right; but God gives a suitable share of true Wisdom with this inheritance: As when *Saul* was anointed King, he was turned into another man; *1 Sam. 10. 6.* Alas, what is Heaven to us unless we be fit for it? Our dear Lord Jesus that went to prepare a place for us, must also prepare us for that blessed place. In this second branch we have,

1. Something implied.
2. Something expressed.

1. That

Meetness for Heaven. 11

1. That which is implied, is that no Man is fit or meet for Heaven by nature. Thence observe,

Doct. 7. *That every Soul by nature is altogether unmeet for Heaven.*

2 Cor. 3. 5. *Not that we are [inaoī] sufficient or meet (for its the same word with this) of our selves to think any thing as of our selves.* Alas, what Merit, either of congruity or condignity, can there be in Man to obtain Heaven? If he cannot think well, sure he cannot will well, act well, to deserve or fit himself for such a Mercy; especially since Man by nature is a Child of wrath, a Limb of Satan, dead in sins, banisht out of Paradise, hath no heart to look that way; nay hath enmity in his mind to what is good. God doth all: [*Dignatus est nos assumere.*] The Sun of Righteousness shines on

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on these dunghil souls : He alone makes Vessels of Honour : He fills them with the Treasures of Grace, and fits them for Glory : [*Inhabiles habiles faciens ;*] Of unfit making them fit, *i. e.* meet for his glorious presence.

2. Here is something expressed that is held forth in these two propositions.

Doct. 8. *That all those and only those that shall eternally partake of the Heavenly inheritance in the other World, are made meet for it in this World.*

Doct. 9. *That its a transcendent Mercy worth thanking God for, to be made meet for Heaven.*

Of these two last in their order.

1. *That all those, and only those that shall partake of the Heavenly inheritance in the other World, must be made meet for it in this World.*

All

Meetness for Heaven. 13

All that I shall do in the Doctrinal part is,

1. For Explication.
2. Confirmation.
1. To shew what this meetness is, then prove the necessity of it.

C H A P. II.

Distinctions about meetness for Heaven : What habitual meetness is : Both relative and real.

1. **F**OR a more methodical proceeding in explaining this Subject, I shall premise some distinctions, by which you may understand what that meetness for Heaven is, that I mean.

1. There is an [*aptitudo Legalis & Evangelica,*] a Legal and Evangelical meetness. Since the fall of Man, no meer Man can fulfil all Righteousness, or by his own power attain to any thing pleasing

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pleasing to God ; so a legal meet-
ness is not attainable ; *We have all
sinned and come short of the glory
of God : See Rom. 3. 23, 24. ch.
8. 2, 3, 8. Gal. 3. 10. 13.*

2 *Dist.* There is an [*aptitudo
operum & persona*, i. e.] meetness
of works, and of the person :
This explains the former in the
Covenant of Works, the person
was accepted for the works sake ;
but in the Covenant of Grace the
work is accepted for the persons
sake : If the person *be accepted in
the beloved*, Eph. 1. 6. God owns
both person and offering, as he
did *Abel*, Heb. 11. 4, 6. But what
proportion can the best Services of
the best Men bear to this Eternal
Reward ? Luke 17. 10. Nor can
Humane Sufferings purchase this
Glory to be revealed. Rom. 8. 18.

3 *Dist.* There is [*aptitudo per-
fecta & progressiva*,] a perfect,
compleat meetness for Heaven :

This

Meetness for Heaven. 15

This is compatible only to the Spirits of just men made perfect, Heb. 12. 23. But who can say I have made my heart clean ; I am pure from my sin. Prov. 20. 9. Alas, we know but in part, and so love but in part. 1 Cor. 13. 12. Even Paul that was perfect in point of sincerity, yet was not already perfect in point of degree, but was pressing forward, Phil. 3. 12—15. Christians here below are but [*in via non in patria*] in the road to perfection, singing the song of degrees, and not in the height of Zion. Sincerity is Gospel perfection, and the Christians preparation, together with a progressive motion.

4 Dist. There is [*aptitudo habitualis & actualis*] an habitual and an actual meetness for Heaven ; or which may be thus distinguished ; there is a [*jus hereditarium*, and a *jus aptitudinale*] an here-

16 Meetness for Heaven.

hereditary right, and an aptitude or actual fitness for this Inheritance : My Text includes both, and I shall open both ; for they are both necessary in their kind ; and in this sense Gods Children are said to be counted worthy of Kingdom of God, 2 Thess. 1. 5. and saith Christ, *They shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy*, Rev. 3. 4. And therefore are we exhorted to walk worthy of God, *who hath called us unto his Kingdom and Glory*, 1 Th. 2. 12. It imports a conveniency, suitability, answerableness in a limited Gospel-sense ; like Children of such a Father, as Heirs of such an Inheritance, as Candidates for such an Office and Honour : There is a (τὸ πρέπον) seemliness appertaining to every Calling ; Princes, Magistrates, Ministers, must have a decency and suitability to their Profession : So here.

Well

Meetness for Heaven. 17

Well then, I shall chiefly speak to this twofold meetness. 1. Habitual meetness, which is in opposition to perfect unmeetness, *i. e.* a state of Nature, Unregeneracy. 2. An actual meetness, which is contra-distinct from imperfect meetness; and both are necessary in their kind.

Quest. 1. What is that habitual meetness for the Inheritance of the Saints in Light, without which Men can never attain to it, or have eternal possession of it?

Ans. This habitual meetness consists in a twofold change;

1. Relative.

2. Real.

1. It consists in a Relative change: This also is twofold, *viz.*

(1.) Justification.

(2.) Adoption.

(1.) The poor sinner is standing at Gods Bar as a guilty Malefactor, under the dreadful Sentence

18 *Meetness for Heaven.*

tence of a just Condemnation,
for all the World is become guilty,
 (*and sinners*) subject to judgment;
before God, Rom. 3. 19. Not a
 Son of *Adam* can plead innocence.
 Its well if we be as the blushing
 Rose, the Lilly-whiteness is lost.
He that believeth not is condemned
already, John 3. 18. and the wrath
of God abides on him, verse 36.
 It was on him when he was born;
 and it abides still on him, if not
 taken off him by Justification :
 Who can think the Prince will
 promote him to Honour that is un-
 der an attainder for Treason? He
 must be cleared of that charge, or
 he is fitter for Execution then Pro-
 motion. Pardon must precede
 preferment. You must be first in
 Christ Jesus, and then *there is no*
condemnation to you, Rom. 8. 1.
 You must be received into Favour
 before you be promoted to Ho-
 nour. The sinner must be justifi-
 ed

Meetings for Heaven. 19

ed before he can be glorified. *Rom.* 8. 30. Never think of ascending to Heavenly Glory under the load of guilt : That guilt will shut Heavens gates against thee : The guilt of one sin will press a Soul, (yea, millions of Souls) to Hell ; for *the wages of sin is death.* *Rom.* 6. 23. O therefore, what need is there of Justification as the introduction to Salvation ! You must be justified by his grace, if ever you be made heirs according to the hope of *Eternal Life*, *Tit.* 3. 7. Never think your sins will be blotted out in the day of refreshing, except you repent here and be converted : *Acts* 3. 19. You must be justified by faith that you may have peace with God here, and so rejoyce in hope of the glory of God : *Rom.* 5. 1, 2. You cannot think to leap from the Bar to the Throne : But must be cleared by order of Justice, through Christ.

20 Meetness for Heaven.

Christs satisfaction in the Court of God. This, this is absolutely necessary to a meetness for this Heavenly Inheritance.

(2.) Adoption : This is another Relative change. Alas, by nature we have quite lost our Filiation, and so forfeited our Childs part of the Heavenly Inheritance : We are (*exules a Regno*) banisht out of Paradise, and there are placed *Cherubims, and a flaming Sword, which turns every way to keep the way of the Tree of Life : Gen. 3. 24.* Yea, we are voluntarily gone into a far Countrey, have wasted our substance, disowned our Fathers house, are feeding swinish Lusts, and feeding our selves with poor husks of worldly things ; and till we be adopted and admitted again into our Fathers house, we are not fit to eat the Childrens Bread, or heir the Childs Inheritance : God himself

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Meetness for Heaven. 21

himself hath contrived a way how to settle the best Inheritance on such as he finds strangers. *Jer.*

3. 19. But I said, how shall I put thee among the Children, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage of the hosts of Nations ?

Then I said thou shalt call me, my Father, and shalt not turn away from me : Oh blessed contrivance !

And will any think to cross Gods contrivance ! Shall Mens folly challenge infinite Wisdom ! Is not the Heavenly Inheritance Gods own to give ? And doth not our Lord say, *such honour shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father. Matth. 20. 23.*

Can you think to wrest Heaven out of Gods hands whether he will or not ? And must he falsifie his word to gratifie you ? Will he set the Crown on Rebels heads ? Or give this Inheritance of Saints to the Devils slaves ? No, doubtless

22 *Meetness for Heaven.*

less you must be adopted Sons, or no Lawful Heirs. Bastards heir no Land. *Jephthahs* Brethren thrust him out, saying, *Thou shalt not inherit in our Fathers house, for thou art the Son of a strange Woman.* *Judg.* 11. 2. And what bold intruder art thou, that darest expect to claim such an Inheritance as Heaven without the relation of a Son? *Adam* its true, was Gods Son by Creation; but alas, he and we in him have quite lost that sweet Relation; and we must either be restored in Christ, Gods well-beloved Son, or we are like to be banisht for ever: *God sent his own Son, —that through him we might receive the adoption of Sons:* *Gal.* 4. 5, 6. And have you the Spirit of his Son in your hearts to cry *Abba Father*? which elsewhere is called *the spirit of Adoption.* *Rom.* 8. 15. Tell me not that all Men are the Sons of God:

Meetness for Heaven. 23

God : So were the Devils : God will make you know that this is a peculiar priviledge, known to very few, injoyed by fewer ; but it is the fruit of singular Love, and is attended with this unparalell'd advantage of seeing God as he is ; and a day is coming when these Sons and Heirs in disguise shall then be like their Father ; 1 *Joh.* 3. 1, 2. then Atheists that will not believe that there is any such difference among Men, and bold intruders, that dreamed of a right, without pretending or proving their Adoption, shall be utterly confounded.

2. But besides this Relative change, there is also a real change upon those Souls that God makes meet for Heaven, and this consists in

1. Conversion to God.
2. Covenanting with God.
1. Conversion to God : This
is

24 Meetness for Heaven.

is expressed in the words immediately following my Text, *Ver. 13.* *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the Kingdom of his dear Son.* This is a description of Conversion, and a preparation for Glory : Compare this with *Acts 26. 18.* See there the privilege annexed : Observe it, Conversion makes Saints ; and only Saints partake of this Inheritance : If all the Men on Earth, and Angels in Heaven, should joyn their Forces together, they could not save one unconverted Soul : Truth it self hath asserted it with a solemn asseveration, *Matth. 18. 3.* *Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven :* The like doth the same mouth assert with a fourfold asseveration ; *Joh. 3. 3, 5.* I wonder often how careless sinners

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Meetness for Heaven. 25

ners that are conscious to themselves that never any such work passed on them, can eat and drink, or sleep quietly, and never so much as ask this question; Am I converted or am I not? If I be, when or how did my Soul pass through the pangs of the new birth? What tears, fears, what groans and agonies hath it cost me? What fruits hath it brought forth in me? Where's this new Creature, the Divine Nature, the Image and Seed of God working Heaven-wards? What stamp, what sheep-mark can I shew, as the fruit of Gods being at work on my Soul, and an earnest of this glorious Inheritance? But if there be no such change, (as I doubt there is not) how can I be quiet? Sure my pillow is soft, or my heart hard, and my Conscience seared, that hear or read my own doom in such a Scripture, from
C the

26 *Meetress for Heaven.*

the mouth of the Judge himself, standing at Heaven-gates and shutting me out, as if he named me, saying, Be gone thou unconverted sinner; I know thee not; converting Grace never changed thy Heart or Life; though I often summoned thee, and knockt at thy door, yet thou hadst no heart or desire to turn from thy sinful ways, nor so much as fall down on thy knees, and ask this grace of Conversion of me, or use the means for it, or so much as examine whether thou hast it or no, but wastest on in a golden dream, and now I must tell thee roundly to thy cost, depart, oh be gone from my presence thou poor wretched unconverted sinner: This state, this place is for none but sincere Converts.

2. *Covenanting with God:* When the glorious day of our Lords appearing shall spring, he
calls

Meetness for Heaven. 27

calls forth his covenanted people to crown his gracious promises with compleat performance. *Psal.* 50 5. *Gather my Saints together, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice : q. d. I take little notice of common or outside Worshippers, they shall be set on my left hand ; but there is amongst you some serious Souls that look beyond the Ordinance, I have observed them, they have solemnly devoted themselves to me, and accepted me in a Covenant-way : These, these are the persons, and these only, that I have taken for the lot of my inheritance, and for whom I have laid up a safe and satisfying inheritance : But to the uncovenanted soul, or hypocritical pretender to covenant, God will say, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth ?* *Psal.*

26 *Meetress for Heaven.*

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Meetness for Heaven. 27

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tes, or that thou shouldest take
my covenant in thy mouth ? Psal.

28 *Meetness for Heaven.*

50. 16. VVhat ground hast thou to own me? Or to claim any thing from me for this world or another. Man as a creature can have no intercourse with God, but in a Covenant-way; much less can a sinner expect any good from God, but by vertue of Covenant: But what canst thou say for this promised Inheritance, that hast nothing to do with the promises? *For all the promises of God in Christ are yea and amen; 2 Cor. 1. 20.* But thou hast never spent one hour solemnly to review and renew thy Baptismal Covenant, and ingage thy Soul to God; and since thou art an Alien from the Commonwealth of *Israel*, and a stranger from the Covenant of Promise, by consequence thou art without Christ, and without God in this world, and therefore without hope of a better state in the other world: *Eph. 2. 12.* But
strangers

Meetness for Heaven. 29

strangers and foreigners are become fellow-citizens with the Saints of this new *Jerusalem*; *ver.* 19. How is that? Doubtless by taking this sacred Oath of Fealty and Allegiance to the King of Heaven: By Covenant you have a title to all the good things of Earth and Heaven. Sinner think of this, thou that lovest to be loose, and scornest the fetters of this Holy League; thou dost in effect say, I will have none of God, Christ, Pardon, Heaven: If I must have them on no other terms, but under such bonds and obligations, let them take this Heavenly Inheritance for me: And dost thou think this golden chain of honour, worse then the Devils iron fetters of sin, and amazing reward of flames and torments? if you need not God and Heaven, be it known to you, God needs not you; but can strain for the revenue of Glory to

30 *Meetness for Heaven.*

his Justice in your necessary confusion, because you would not voluntarily submit to his terms for so glorious an Inheritance.

C H A P. III.

What actual meetness for Heaven is in the exercises of Graces.

2. **T**H E next general head I am to treat of, is to discover what is the Souls actual meetness for this glorious Inheritance, supposing the foresaid habitual meetness, both relative and real : For all a Christians work is not done when his state is changed, and he becomes a Saint ; nay his work doth but now begin as a Saint, to get into an actual meetness for Glory. This, this is the business of a Child of God : The former hath a remote meetness ; this puts into a proximate or near-

er

Meetress for Heaven. 31

er capacity for Heaven. The former renders the Christians state safe, this sweet and comfortable. This is the Man that hath set all things in order for another world, that hath nothing to do, but to pass over the *Jordan* of Death into the *Canaan* of Heaven; this is the Man that's point blank meet, mouth-meet (as it were) for Heaven, fit to take his flight into another World : Interpreters think this word [יָדָיו] sufficient, or meet, answers to the Hebrew word [יָדָיו] *dai*. Lev. 12. 8. If she be not able to bring a Lamb : [Heb. thus, Her hand find not sufficiency of a Lamb.] The word is attributed to God, who is, [יָדָיו] *Gen. 17. 1.* But as God is sufficient and suitable to all his Creatures, so by the same Almighty grace he will make Creatures suitable to his mind and ends : So then this

32 *Meetness for Heaven.*

word is rather to be rendered by [idoneus] meet, then [dignus] worthy; yet worthy in a Gospel qualified sense. Observe it, those judge themselves most unworthy, whom God and Man oft judge most fit and worthy, *Luke 7. 4.* They said, *he is worthy for whom he should do this*; but *ver. 6.* himself saith, *I am not worthy thou shouldst enter under my roof.* And thus it is with a gracious Soul, looking up and seeing the holiness of Gods infinite Majesty; looking forward and beholding the moment of Eternity, and purity of Heaven; looking inward and backward, and seeing his many iniquities and great deformity: Oh, cries the sensible Christian, who is fit for Heaven? Oh how unmeet am I for this glorious state or high honour? Its true, but grace makes of Rebels, Subjects; of Subjects, Servants; of Ser-

vants,

Meetness for Heaven. 33

vants, Sons ; of Sons, Heirs ; of Heirs he so disposeth, and qualifieth them, that nothing will content them below this inheritance of the Saints in light ; and their Spirits shall be so suited to it that the great God will judge them *worthy to obtain that world and the resurrection from the dead, -to be equal to the Angels, as being the children of God, and the children of the resurrection.* See Luke 20. 35, 36. As the Christian by conversion is the Man cut and shaped out for Heaven, so whiles he lives he is and must be still a squaring, hammering, modelling for further meetness for it ; and as God is said to work us for the self-same thing, 2 Cor. 5. 5. [*κατεργασμένοι*] by curious contrivances of efficacious grace, to put sinners into a capacity for glory : As Goldsmiths who burnish Gold ; and Carvers or artificial Ingravers in Wood

34 *Meetness for Heaven.*

and Stone, who make one part of their work suit and fit another : So also Christians themselves must *work out their own salvation*, Phil. 2. 12. [*κατεργάζεσθε*] i. e. Leave nothing undone which God hath enjoined you to do in this World, in order to a due preparation for Heaven. This in general is a meetness.

More particularly, this actual meetness for Heaven consists in these four things.

1. A lively exercise of suitable graces.
 2. A clear evidence of our spiritual state.
 3. A dispatching work off our hands.
 4. A being mortified to time, and a longing to be in Heaven.
1. A lively exercise of suitable graces : i. e. Such graces as actually capacitate for glory ; its true every

Every grace doth qualifie for glory, for grace is glory begun, and glory is grace consummate : But there are some graces that have a direct tendency to, and whereby a Christian doth (as it were) *lay hold on eternal life*, as the word is, 1 Tim. 6. 12, 19. *e. g.*

(1.) The grace of Faith, which *is the substance of things hoped for, and evidence of things not seen.* Heb. 11. 1. It ventures all upon a promise; *sees him that is invisible,* ver. 27. and represents Heavenly Objects as close at hand, *and embraceth them,* v. 13. [*ἀσπασμῶς*] drawing the Object to them, as the word signifies : Overlooking or overcoming all these worldly visible Objects. Faith spies something beyond Time or Clouds, of more worth then all the World, and hazards all for the obtaining of it : When Faith is upon the wing, it soars above the Sun, and fetcheth

36 *Meetness for Heaven.*

fetcheth down Heavenly objects
and incomes into the Soul : It is
like the spyes, and brings a cluster
of the grapes of *Canaan* ; even
Joy and peace in believing, *Rom.*
15. 13. yea, *Joy unspeakable and*
full of glory ; *1 Pet. 1. 8.* Yea,
the lowest actings of the faith of
adherence dare commit the keep-
ing of the Soul into his Creators
hands, *1 Pet. 4. 19.* and is per-
swaded, *God will keep that which*
he hath committed to him, *2 Tim.*
1. 12. And this composedness is
an antedating of Heaven. Alas,
saith the poor Christian, I know
not certainly how I stand for Hea-
ven ; I dare not yet say my Faith
will end in the saving of my Soul ;
but this I dare say, God is merci-
ful to souls ; Christ dyed for sin-
ners ; he is faithful that hath pro-
mised ; the Covenant is well or-
dered, and sure some Souls shall
be saved, and why not I ? I hang
on

on his Free-grace, I come with Tears in my Eyes, Confession in my Mouth, Grief in my Heart for my sins; I am weary of my burden and labour in my travels God-wards, who can tell but I may find rest? He hath said, *those that thus come to him he will in no wise cast out*; I will venture this way: I have tryed all other ways but they are in vain; its but losing my labour, which I am sure I shall not, if my Faith be but sincere: This Soul is in the confines of the promised Land; and is meet for this Inheritance.

(2.) Hope. As Faith brought Heaven down to the Souls Eye, so Hope carries out the Soul to this future enjoyment. This Anchor is cast into the vast Ocean of Eternity, but finds sure Anchorhold, for it *enters into that within the Vail, Heb. 6. 19.* and this centers the tossing sinner on the
rock

38 *Meetness for Heaven.*

rock of Ages : It sees Heaven opened, and it self in Gods time advanced with *Lazarus* into *Abrahams* Bosom , and is content at present to bear the roughness and affronts he meets with in his way, saying, these things will be mended when I get home : Nay, the Text saith, *we are saved by hope,* *Rom* 8. 24. Hope anticipates its revenues, and like a young heir takes up upon trust, and lives at the rate of that Inheritance he is heir to. Thus the Christian gets everlasting Consolation, because he hath good hopes through Grace, *2 Thess.* 2. 16. O saith the Believer, Divine Revelations have so fully demonstrated the reality of future Glory, that my Faith no more doubts of it then of going to Bed at night, and why should not my *Flesh* (and Spirit) rest in hope ? *Psal.* 16. 9. Why should not then my heart be glad ?
Why

Meetness for Heaven. 39

Why may not my glory rejoyce?
Yea, *I will rejoyce in hope of the
glory of God, for my hope will not
make me ashamed. Rom. 5. 2, 5.*
I dare venture my hopes and my
all in this blessed Covenant-bot-
tom. *My soul, hope thou in God,
for I shall yet praise him, and that
for ever. Psal. 42. 11.*

(3.) Love : That's a grace
that shines brightest in its proper
Orb above ; but the more it is ex-
ercised here below, the more of
Heaven : Love resembles the
Soul most to God, and raiseth the
Soul to an Heavenly Life : *God
is love, and he that dwelleth in love
dwelleth in God, and God in him.*
1 *Joh. 4. 16.* The Soul that is
carried out to God in pure flames
of holy love, hath mounted alrea-
dy into the highest Region, and
bathes it self in those pure streams
that raise and ravish the Spirit in a
continued extasie : The more
Love,

40 *Meetness for Heaven.*

Love, the more fittedness for Heaven : *If love be increased and abound, our hearts are established unblameable - at his coming, 1 Th. 3. 12, 13.* Yea, the more Love, the more of Heaven ; for what is our love, but a reflexion of Gods love ; 1 Joh. 4. 19. Oh, faith the Christian, I feel the sweet beams of the Sun of Righteousness warming my heart ; methinks those Heavenly sparks have set me in a flame, that when I am Musing the fire burns ; when I am Praying or Praising God, my Soul mounts up to my Lord as pillars of smoak ; and I love to be near him, and to be acting for him. Oh how sweet is every Love-letter that comes from him ! How pleasant are some tokens of love that come from the hand and heart of my beloved ! Here is the soul that is meet for Heaven.

(4) Humility and Self-denial.
Will

Meetness for Heaven. 41

Will you believe it ? The lower the Christian casts himself down, the nearer Heaven : But this is a truth ; *Matth. 5. 3. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.* God makes his court in the humble and contrite Spirit ; *Isa. 57. 15.* Oh faith Christian, this grace have I found in me, that duty is performed by me, this corruption have I mortified ; that burden have I born ; what say I ? That I have done this or that ? O no, *By the grace of God, I am what I am, —I laboured, yet not I, but the grace of God, 1 Cor. 15. 10.* I dare not say any thing is my own but sin ; and what's performed by me is mixt with sin and imperfection : [*Horreo quicquid de meo est,*] I tremble for fear (saith *Luther*) at any thing that is of mine own : I must not depend on mine own Righteousness ; O that I may be found

found in Christ ! I am nothing, can do nothing, deserve nothing but Death and Hell : If ever I be admitted into Heaven, it must be upon the account of Christ; his Merits upon the Cross; his Intercession in Heaven. That's an excellent Text, *Rev. 19. 7, 8. Let us be glad and rejoyce, and give honour to him ; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his Wife hath made her self ready : But how is she ready ? Why, to her was granted, that she should be arrayed in fine linnen, clean and white ; for the fine linnen is the righteousness of Saints.* Indeed its no other then Christs Righteousness imputed : This is the upper garment that must not only cover our nakedness, but the tattered rags of our own Righteousness, whether that relate to a glorious state of the Church on Earth or in Heaven, I dispute not : But I am
sure

sure its the bravest suit that she can put on, and she will look trim in that only ; - and woe to them that appear in their best inherent Righteousness : Let the proud self-justiciary say, [*Cælum gratis non accipiam,*] I will not have Heaven *gratis*, or for nothing, I will pay a proportionable rate for it ; then thou art like to go without it, for its not saleable Ware ; *Rom. 9. 31.* But let a poor self-condemning Publican come and beg Pardon and Heaven for Christs sake, and God will not deny him : *For he resisteth the proud, but gives grace and glory to the humble, Jam. 4. 6.*

C H A P. IV.

Meetness for Heaven, in clear evidences of Title to it.

2. **T**He next particular wherein a meetness for Heaven doth consist is Assurance, or grounded

44 *Meetness for Heaven.*

ed evidence of our title to this Heavenly Inheritance; for no Man is ready to go out of this World, but he that hath solid grounds of his safe estate for another World; for doubts breed fears, and those fears beget unwillingness to go hence: He dare not dye that knows not whither he must go, and he is not meet for death that hath not used Gods appointed means to obtain assurance, a thousand to one a Soul at uncertainties hath been a slothful negligent Soul, for in an usual way, diligence begets assurance: For so saith the Apostle, *Heb. 6. 11. We desire that every one of you would shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope, to the end that ye be not slothful; ver. 12. So 2 Pet. 1. 10. Give diligence to make your Calling and Election sure: And what then? Why then, ver. 11. he adds, For so an entrance shall be*

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Meetness for Heaven. 45

be ministred to you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. A Ship may make an hard shift to get sneaking into the Harbor, with Anchors lost, Cables rent, Sails torn, Masts broken ; these get safe in, but with much ado ; but oh how gallantly, doth another ride in, to the credit of her Master, good example to others, comfort and satisfaction to all in the Ship, when she comes in with Sails spread, Flags up, Trumpets sounding, and well Victualled ; surely these come in bravely. This is just the difference betwixt a lazy Professor that wants assurance, and an active Christian in his voyage to this blessed Haven. God requires this assurance ; means are appointed for attaining it ; serious Christians have gained it, so mayest thou, and so must thou endeavour after it : You'll say, how is

46 *Meetness for Heaven.*

is it got? By what means may a Christian come to the assurance of his title to this Heavenly Inheritance, that he may be meet or fit to take possession of it at death?

I Answer, in general it must be supposed that you have a title, which is your habitual meetness, or else how can you be assured of it? You that are unregenerate, you have a greater work to pass through before you are capable of obtaining assurance: But supposing this, I answer.

1. An holy diligence in increasing, exercising graces, and performance of duty. This I hinted before. Acts evidence habits: Improving grace is Gods way to clear up grace: Blowing up sparks will best discover them: A flame is sooner discerned then a spark in the embers: Christians by stirring up the gift of God discover it: 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. Motion is a good
evi-

Meetress for Heaven. 47

evidence of life : Activity for God, and tendency Heaven-ward will put you out of doubt : All duties tend to assurance, or spring from it : Striving, running, fighting, will be crowned with clear evidence : God loves to crown diligence : To him that hath (*i. e.* useth and improveth well what he hath) shall be given, and he shall have abundance ; (*i. e.* more grace and the comfort of it) as the collision of Flint and Steel, begets light ; so the acting of grace produceth this fruit, *viz.* Assurance :
For the work of righteousness is peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever.
Isa. 32. 17. Now, now, the Soul is ready for glory, when he is in duty, above duty, with God in the lively actings of grace, which is a part of, and a prologue to glory. The Christian is going from strength to strength, till he appear

48 *Meetness for Heaven.*

appear before God in *Zion*. Oh happy soul that is thus upon the wing!

2. Reflection upon Heart and Life, and comparing both with the word of God. This is Gods way to get assurance: Have I the conditions of Gospel-promises, Faith and Repentance? Do those graces within me answer the characters of such in the Scriptures? Doth my Soul eccho to the experiences of Saints in the word of God? Can I follow the Rules and Prescriptions that my Lord hath laid down; *To deny my self, take up his Cross and follow him*? Have I the essential characters of a Christian? I dare not believe Satan and my own treacherous heart; I will examine and prove my self; 2 Cor. 13. 5. I will not spare my self in any thing; I will be impartial, and deal faithfully by disquisitive tryal now, as I would be
found

Meetness for Heaven. 49

found in the decisive tryal at the last day : Its a matter of life and death : I will lay judgment to the line : I will go to the Law and to the Testimony : The word must judge me at the great day, it shall be my judge now : No matter what the World saith of me ; nor must I be determined by the votes of the best Christians, or Godly Ministers : I must, and will, and do *prove mine own work, and then I shall have rejoycing in my self alone, and not in another, Gal. 6 4.*

3. Appealing and approving the heart to God. Alas, the best Christian is too apt to be partial in his own case, or blind at home ; our Minds are as ill set as our Eyes, neither of them apt to look inwards ; and when we do look, alas, we are apt to look through a false or flattering glass, or our Eye is vitiated with bad humours ; and therefore must we with *Job*

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appeal

50 *Meetress for Heaven.*

appeal to God, *ch. 10. 7. Thou knowest that I am not wicked: And ch. 23. 10. He knoweth the way that I take: And though David had communed with his own heart, and his spirit had made diligent search, Psal. 77. 6. yet he challengeth God to a further privy search; Psal. 26. 2. Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my reins, and my heart. And again, Psal. 139. 23. Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts: Not as though God were ignorant of them till he searcht; but its spoken after the manner of Men: And that God might further acquaint David, with the secrets of his heart. Thus the sincere Christian faith, Lord, I set my self before thee as a glass in the Sun; look upon me, look through me; thou knowest all things; see how my heart is affected towards thee; discover to me*

Meetness for Heaven. 51

me the inmost workings of my Soul ; if there be any secret guile in folding it self in the lurking-places of my heart, bring it to light ; if there be any flaw in my evidences, let me see it before it be too late : I am too apt, through self-love to judge the best, but do thou declare my state and my frame as it is : Thou that must be my judge shalt be my witness. *My witness is in Heaven, and my record is on high ; Job 16. 19.* Here's a Soul usually comforted in his integrity, and such an one is meet for Heaven.

4. Praying to God for the shinnings and sealings of his Spirit : For indeed let all these means be used, yet evidence will not come unless God be pleased to shine upon his own grace in the Soul : *My Conscience, saith Paul, bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, Rom. 9. 1. and Rom. 8. 16. The Spirit*

52 *Meetness for Heaven.*

it self beareth witness with our Spirit that we are the Children of God. This indeed is the Sun-light assurance. This alone scatters all mists, answers all objections, banisheth all doubts and fears ; and oh what an honour and satisfaction is it to a Child of God, that the Third Person of the Sacred Trinity should come down and give in its infallible Testimony at the Ear of a Believers Conscience ! This is like the Son of God coming down into our nature , and dying for us. Oh transcendent condescension ! Oh unparalleld privilege of Gods Children ! Yet this is purchased by Christ, and promised to Believers, not only to be a Witness, but a Seal. 2 Cor. 1. 22. and 5. 5. Eph. 1. 13. This is often, yea ordinarily given after believing ; and when it comes, it brings its own evidence along with it : So that the perplexed Child

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Meetness for Heaven. 53

Child of God, after many fore conflicts, strugglings, tuggings, sad thoughts of heart, comes at last to some consistency, as to expel fears, cares, doubts, and now at last is brought to that, that he no more questions Gods love then his faithfulness ; and this usually comes in after some notable wrestlings at the Throne of Grace in Prayer, according to that *Job. 16. 24.* *Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name : (i. e. Very little comparatively, and as you shall do.) Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.* God will have his Child to beg when he designs to give, to exercise our Obedience, and to honour his own Ordinance : Then he gives assurance, and the joy of his Salvation ; and now the believing Soul is meet to be translated into the joy of his Lord.

But you will say, is none meet

54 *Meekness for Heaven.*

for Heaven but such as have assurance? Then what shall a poor doubting Soul say of it self, that is dark, and much discouraged as many a good Soul is?

Ans. 1. A title to this Inheritance is necessary, but knowledge of this title is not absolutely necessary. Many have dyed safely, though under clouds. Our Lord himself, cryed dying, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* There was Relation, *my God*, yet in some sense he was forsaken.

2. There's degrees of assurance; as he that said, *Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief.* Few enjoy a full plerophory, and those that have it, yet have it not at all times. *Mr. Pauls Bains* said dying, *Sustentation I have, but suavities spiritual I do not feel.*

3. Its one thing what God doth in an arbitrary way of suspending the comforts of his Spirit from the
best

Meetness for Heaven. 55

best of his Saints, (yea he withheld them from his own Son) and another thing, what may, and usually is, the effect of Mans sloth and negligence; which is too commonly our case; as Mr. Dod answered him that complained of want of assurance, *why Man, assurance may be had, and what have you been doing all this while?*

4. Yet this will hold good, that a clear evidence of our title is a great meetness and readiness for Death: For though assurance be not necessary [*ad esse*] to the being of a Christian; yet its necessary [*ad bene esse*] of a Christian, *i. e.* to his well-being, or comfortable passage through, or parting out of this World; for if we must draw near to God in a duty with full assurance of Faith, *Heb. 10. 22.* much more at death.

Oh what a vast difference there betwixt a Soul carried

54 *Meekness for Heaven.*

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56 *Meetness for Heaven.*

the wing of Faith, and flames of Love, in an extasie of Joy, and the poor doubting, heartless, disconsolate Soul ! The former is like some high Mountains, that are above Storms and Clouds, as they say *Olympus* is clear and beautiful ? Oh the calmness and serenity of the well-assured Christian ! He hath a double Heaven, well at present, better presently ; its but shooring this gulf, crossing this *Jordan*, passing this stile, as Dr. Taylor said, *and I shall be in my Fathers house.* Death it self, as terrible as it is, in it self and to others, is a stingleless Serpent ; my Friend and Fathers Servant sent to fetch me home ; Angels shall guard me ; my Lord will bid me welcome ; my Christian-Friends gone before will make Heaven ring with shouts of joy at my landing safe, and my Soul shall ever be with the Lord ; But alas, the poor doubting

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Meetness for Heaven. 57

ing Soul, whose evidences are not clear, cries out, Alas, dye I must, and dye I dare not; I dare not say God is my God, Christ my Saviour, the Spirit my sanctifier, Promises the Charters that convey the Inheritance to others I cannot apply; whither I am going I know not; God carries strangely to me; I remember God and am troubled; guilt stares me in the face; I am conscious to my self of thousands of sins; and though I have been long bungling about Faith and Repentance, yet I am not sure they are sincere and saving, and whether God will receive my sad departing Soul: [*Anxius vixi, dubius morior*, as that great Man said,] I have lived under fears, I dye under doubts, and God knows what will become of me, and I may thank my self; alas, this is the fruit of my sloth, security, my slipping into sin backslidings.

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58 *Meetness for Heaven.*

slidings from God, intermittings of duty, careless and heartless performances; wo is me, what will become of me! These are the astonishing thoughts of a poor doubtful dying Soul: And is this Man meet for Heaven? He may be right for the main, but he cannot make Death welcome.

C H A P. V.

*Meetness for Heaven in dispatching
our work here, off our hands.*

3. **T**HE next thing wherein our meetness for this blessed Inheritance doth consist, is in dispatching our main work in the world, that God sent us to do; whatever that is God expects we should dispatch it, and get it done; this we must all address our selves chearfully to do, and be very diligent in doing it, *Eccles. 9. 10.*

What-

Meetness for He^{av}en. 61

Whatsoever thine hand findeth, ^s and
do it with thy might. This is ^{ing}
a time of working, the other
world is a day of retribution ;
and when the Child of God hath
wrought his days work, its a fit
time to go to Bed. Thus our dear
Lord tells his Father, *Joh. 17. 4, 5.*
—I have finished the work that thou
gavest me to do : And now, O Fa-
ther, glorifie me with thy own self.

Quest. What work is it that
God lets before Men to dispatch
and manage ?

Answ. There is a fourfold work
lyes upon a Christians hands to
manage in this world.

1. Personal Spiritual work,
Soul work, wherein God is more
immediately concerned ; which is
the glorifying of God, and saving
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these in one, they are inseparable
companions, and its a mighty busi-
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58 *Meetness for Heaven.*

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Meetness for Heaven

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58 *Meetness for Heaven.*

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Meetness for He

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Witness for Heaven.

see on the Earth : This in
measure is required of us, and
the sincere Christian makes it his
design. Thou knowest, Oh my
dear Lord, what is that which
hath lain highest in my heart ever
since thou openedst mine Eyes :
The earnest desire of my Soul hath
been to be nothing in mine own
eyes, that God alone may have all
the glory ; I will confess and give
glory to God ; I will, and through
grace have desired, to make it my
business to give glory to God by
believing, repenting, obeying,
fruit-bearing ; yea in eating, drink-
ing, and whatsoever I do in natu-
ral, moral or civil actions. This,
this is the mark I shoot at, my
highest aim, *that God in all things*
may be glorified, through Jesus
Christ, 1 Pet. 4. 11. And my bu-
siness is in order thereto, to study
how to please God, and to *abound*
more and more, 1 Theff. 4. 1. to
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Meetress for Heaven. 61

obey Gods Commandments, and to do those things that are pleasing in his sight ; 1 Joh. 3. 22. and oh that my Person and Prayers might be accepted in Christ ! The salvation of my Soul is more dear and precious then this poor perishing Carcase. My grand enquiry is, what must I do to be saved ? This is the one thing needful ; other things are upon the by. Oh that I could work out my own salvation ! I appeal to thee Lord, how many griefs and groans, prayers and pains, fears and tears, this main concern hath cost me : I know there's much of this work about my precious Soul yet undone ; but thou knowest the main is dispatcht : *I have fought a good fight, finisht my course, kept the faith.* 2 Tim. 4. 7. And now my Land-busines is done, let me go to Sea, and launch out into that boundless ocean of eternal happiness.

2. Tem-

62 *Meetness for Heaven.*

2. Temporal work, the business of our Callings and particular occasions. This also the dying Christian is drawing into a narrower compass, that he may voluntarily leave the world, before the world leave him ; the Christian having had his head and hands full of business in his younger days, when old age comes, is glad of a [*quietus est*, or] writ of ease, that he may [*vacare Deo*] be at more leisure for God in holy duties. Methinks, saith the good heart, I have had my share, both of the employments and enjoyments of this lower world, and am well content to shake hands therewith : I can behold with pity the laborious Ants and Pismires running upon this Mole-hill, and busily scrambling for a little dust ; let them take it, God hath made my hands to be sufficient for me ; I have what will bear my charges to the grave ; let
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Meetness for Heaven. 63

it go, I am glad I have so fairly parted with it ; I would not be to enter again upon this busie stage, or put forth to this tumultuous Sea ; I have now other things to mind ; I have now the great work to mind, of setting streight my accounts for another world ; my Peace to make with God ; an Eternity to provide for, which the affairs of the world have thrust out, or distracted me in : This, this shall be my imployment for the future ; *for what will it profit a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ?* I leave all these things to others that succeed me.

3. Relative work. This also may be in some respects dispatched off our hands ; and the doing of it maketh more meet for Heaven. This is not to be slighted, for it is needful in its place. When King *Hezekiah* was sick unto death God sends him this Message ; *Set*
thine

64 *Meetness for Heaven.*

thyne house in order, for thou shalt dye and not live, *Isa.* 38. 1. [*i. e.* Make thy Will, and dispose of thy domestical concerns, so as may be a prevention of quarrels and contentions in thy Family after thy decease :] And *ver.* 3. 'tis said, that *Hezekiah* wept sore : Why so ? Was not *Hezekiah* a Godly Man ? Was not his Soul in a readiness for death ? Yes doubtless, for he dare appeal to God that he had walked before him in truth, and with a perfect heart : What then was the matter ? Why *Hezekiah* had yet no Son, *Manasseh* being not born till three years after this, *q. d.* Lord, if it may be thy will, spare my Life, and give me a Son, for if I dye at this time, I know not how to dispose of the Crown, I am likely to leave the Church and State in miserable distraction and confusion, through the great uncertainty of a suc-

Meetness for Heaven. 65

succession, and the proneness of the people to backslide to their false Worship. God heard his Prayer, gave him a lease of his Life for fifteen years : But this is a duty to all, though it be more necessary to some than to others : But however its useful to settle the Mind at ease, and prevent outward ill consequences, and inward disturbances of Spirit ; but as that good Man was loath to go off the stage Heirless, so other circumstances may call for the settlement of their Families by their last Will and Testament ; especially when Children are left young, &c. Yea, and others also may say, now God hath lengthened out my days to see my Children brought up, and hopeful for Religion, settled in Callings and Families ; there was but this Child, or that business that I desired to see well ordered, as to my Family-affairs:

As

66 Meetness for Heaven.

As Jacob closed up his Blessing of Dan, Gen. 19. 48. *I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.* Now at last, since God hath wrought on such a Child, I will say with old Simeon; *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* Luk. 2. 29, 30.

4. Another work to be dispatcht off our hands is publick work. This concerns men in a publick or private capacity; as when Moses had led Israel out of Egypt, and through the Wilderness, he had dispatcht his work, and having been faithful in Gods house he was fit to dye. So when Joskua had conquered many Kings in Canaan, divided the Land to Israel, he got a discharge and fell asleep. Thus David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his Fathers; Acts

Meetness for Heaven. 67

13. 36. And so *Aaron, Samuel,* and the rest of the Prophets, marcht off the Field by the order of our great Lord General, when they had dispatcht their warfare, and delivered their message : *Your Fathers, where are they? and the Prophets do they live for ever? Zech.*

1. 5. And indeed to what purpose should they or we live, when our work is done? Especially when Gods servants have not only dispatcht that work that concerns present, but future Generations : For this is also the work of our present day. Thus *Solomon* built God an house for future times : And the Apostle *Peter* lays in for after ages, *2 Pet. 1. 15. Moreover, I will endeavour that you may be able after my decease, to have these things alwayes in remembrance !* Its the property of a good man to take care that Religion may live when he is dead.

Ambrose

68 *Meetness for Heaven.*

Ambrose faith of *Theodosius*, I loved the man exceedingly, that when he dyed he was more solicitous for the Churches then his own danger. Then indeed is the Christian meet for Heaven when he hath dispatcht his work on Earth, and laid a foundation for good in after times ; however bears his testimony against corruptions in future generations ; as *Moses*, *Dent.* 31. 26. - 30.

Quest. You will say how can any man be said to dispatch his work till his life be done ? Surely the date of work and life run parallel.

Ans. 1. Active ; doing work may be oft at an end, when suffering work is but a beginning ; for God often reserves suffering work to the last, that patience may have her perfect work ; that the Christian may be perfect and entire wanting nothing : *Jam.* 1. 4. The
Chri-

Meetness for Heaven. 69

Christian hath little to do, but lye in bed, and patiently wait Gods pleasure; and this usually follows on doing Gods will : See *Hebr.* 10. 36. This is indeed a great work to bear our burden patiently, chearfully, thankfully and fruitfully; and say, well for the present, and will be better shortly; the greatest part is then over.

2. Though something be to be done or suffered, yet when the greatest part of a Christians work is done, it may be said it is finished. So it was with our Saviour; *Joh.* 17. 4. *I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.* But was not dying upon the Cross for the sins of Men a principal piece of Christs work? *Answ.* It was so nigh, that he speaks of it as already done; so *ver.* 11. *I am not in the world;* for he was just a going out of it: Besides he had done most of his work, and was ready prest

70 *Meetness for Heaven.*

preſt to do the work fully, the reſt that was behind : *And when our Lord had taſted the vinegar, he ſaid, it is finiſhed. Joh. 19. 30.* This is a cloſing word, as giving up the ghoſt was a cloſing work.

3. Sometimes Divine Providence takes off Gods children from much of their work before their dayes be ended ; this is obvious to a rational eye that then their work is done, as ſometimes by natural cauſes. Thus *Iſaac*, *Jacob* could preſage their own death by the certain prognostick of death, namely, old age : Others by ſome ſickneſs, Conſumptions, which are uſually mortal : Others are taken off moſt of their work by Perſecutions, Priſons, &c. Others are taken off the ſtage of the World by violent death : As a dying Miniſter ſaid on the Scaffold, *Iſaac was old and knew not the day of his death, I am young, and know the day,*

Meetness for Heaven. 71

day, manner, and instruments of my death : Its but a nodding the head, and death doth its office. Now my work is ended.

4. Yet once more : Some godly Ministers and Christians have had a kind of instinct, that death was approaching even in their best health and younger days ; and so consequently of the dispatch of their work ; as some Creatures by natural instinct foresee a falling house. So we find of Bishop *Juel*, that long before his sickness he foretold it approaching, and in his sickness, the precise day of his death ; he dyed in the fiftieth year of his age. The like we have of *James Andreas*, who foretold the year, yea, hour of his death. I shall but add one instance of that Holy Man of God, and my dear Friend *Mr. Isaac Ambrose*, his surviving Wife told me of his solemn farewell he gave to his Daughter, and

72 *Meetness for Heaven.*

and some other Friends : Yea, the very day of his death several Friends from *Garstang* visited him at *Preston*, with whom he discoursed piously and chearfully, telling them he had finisht his work, having the night before sent his discourse of Angels to the Press, attended them to their Horses, returned, dyed that Evening in his Parlour, where he had shut up himself for Meditation. Thus Gods children are made meet for Heaven by dispatching their work on earth.

C H A P. VI.

Meetness for Heaven, by being mortified to Sin, Time, and Earthly Objects, and being elevated to Heavenly Objects.

4. **T**HE last thing wherein meetness for Heaven doth consist, is a being dead or being mor-

Meetness for Heaven. 73

mortified to all things below and alive, and lively to God and things above. It is true, converting grace deadens the heart to all sublunaries, and lifts it up to divine things : Yea, sometimes the first convictions take off the sinners Spirit more then is meet, and quite damps the affections to lawful comforts, and makes him think he must do nothing in worldly business, but give himself to Reading, Praying and Hearing ; but Gods grace in a little time discovers this to be a Temptation : Yet as grace gets the upper hand, and the Christian mellows and ripens for glory, so he is mortified and gradually transformed and advanced.

1. By further victory over his corruptions ; for as the Christian perfects holiness in the fear of God, so he doth by degrees cleanse himself *from all filthiness both of Flesh and Spirit.* 2 Cor. 7. 1. Sin
E and

74 *Meetness for Heaven.*

and grace being like two buckets at one chain, as the one comes up the other goes down : Or as the ebbing and flowing of the Sea, where it gaineth in one place it loseth in another ; the more holiness, the less sin. Now the Christian grows stronger and stronger ; *The inward man is renewed day by day, 2 Cor. 4. 16.* So the body of sin is weakened, till at last, his fleshly lusts are laid at his feet, and spiritual sins pay tribute to the grace of God in his Soul. Pride, hardness, unbelief and security, keep the Christian humble and watchful, jealous of himself, and maintaining spiritual conflicts against them, so occasionally he is a gainer by his losses, a riser by his falls ; however the Christian grows more in sight of, and serves under the burden of sin ; as *Paul* he cries out, *Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from*

Meetness for Heaven. 75

from the body of this death? Rom.

7. 24. O faith the Christian, what shall I do with this untoward heart? I am weary of these Daughters of *Heth*: Fain would I get rid of this indwelling corruption: Sin I hope hath not dominion over me; but oh when shall the time come that it shall have no indwelling within me? But this is my grief and I must bear it, I am discontentedly contented with my burden: Discontent with sin, content with Gods pleasure: But there's nothing makes me weary of the World but sin: Could I live without sin, I should live without sorrow: The less sin the more of Heaven: Lord set me at liberty.

12. By loosening the affections from all worldly enjoyments. Oh how sapless and insipid doth the World grow to the Soul that is a making meet for Heaven. *He is crucified to the World, and the*

76 *Meekness for Heaven.*

*World to him, Gal. 6. 14. In vain doth this Harlot think to allure me by her laying out her two fair Breasts of Profit and Pleasure. Surely I have behaved and quieted my self, as a Child that is weaned of his Mother : My Soul is even as a weaned Child ; Psal. 131. 2. There's no more relish in these gaudy things to my palate, then in the white of an Egg ; every thing grows a burden to me, were it not duty to follow my calling, and be thankful for my enjoyments. Methinks I enjoy my Wife, Husband and dearest Relations, as if I had none ; I weep for outward losses, as if I wept not ; rejoyce in comforts below as if I rejoyced not ; 1 Cor. 7. 29. —30. my thoughts are taken up with other objects : The men of the world slight me, many seem to be weary of me, and I am as weary of them : [*Non est mortale quod opto*]*
 Its

Meetness for Heaven. 77

Its none of these earthly things
that my Heart is set upon ; my
Soul is set on things above, my
treasure is in Heaven, and I would
have my Heart there also : I have
sent before me all my goods into
another Country, and am shortly
for flitting ; and when I look a-
bout me, I see a bare, empty
house, and am ready to say with
Monica, [*quid hic facio ?*] what
do I here ? My Father, Husband,
Mother, [*Jerusalem* above,] my
Brethren, Sister, best Friends are
above : Methinks I grudge the
World any thing of my Heart,
and think not these temporal visi-
ble things worth a cast of my Eye
compared with things invisible and
eternal ; 2 Cor. 4. 18. I do not
only say with afflicted *Job*, chap.
7. 16. *I loath it, I would not live
always ;* but even with *Solomon* in
the top of all Earthly felicity,
*Eccl. 2. 17, 18. Therefore I hated
life,*

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life, - yea I hated all my labour which I had taken under the Sun: i. e. In compariſon, or in competition with Heavenly enjoyments.

3. By ſpiritualizing Worldly things, and uſing them as ſteps by which the Soul mounts Heavenwards. The Believer conſiders theſe things were made not for themſelves but for higher ends: All things are as Talents to trade with for another World, *Matth.* 25. 16. for an account muſt be given of them; not only Ordinances and Goſpel-priviledges, but Providences both ſweet and ſevere, yea, Creature-comfors, yea, all viſible objects. Thus our Lord [who had grace in perfection] made notable ſpiritual improvement of outward Water, Bread, vines for holy ends; and the more Heavenly the Chriſtian is, the liker he is to his Head, and ſo meeter for Heaven. Whatever
this

Meetres for Heaven. 77

this golden hand of Faith toucheth
is turned into Gold. The Christi-
an fetcheth honey thus out of the
hard Rock : Out of the eater
comes meat. O faith the believing
Soul, if meat be so sweet to an
hungry stomach, how much more
excellent is Gods loving kindness?
If drink be so refreshing to the
thirsty soul, oh how sweet are
those rivers of pleasures? Surely
his love is better then wine. If it
be so pleasant for the Eyes to be-
hold the Sun, how amiable is the
Son of Righteousness? How sweet
is home to the weary Traveller?
And the Haven to the weather-
beaten Mariner? But infinitely
sweet and contentful is Heaven to
the tempted, burdened, tired
Saint : Methinks all I see, and do,
and have, minds me of my home;
and faith, *Arise, depart, this is not
thy rest.* When I am abroad in a
storm, I hast to a shelter : Oh
think

80 *Meetness for Heaven.*

think I then, that I were with my dear Lord, who is as the shadow of a great Rock in a weary Land! When I consider my dim Eyes, my decrepit Feet, my palsie Hands, my panting Lungs; Oh think I, when shall this silver cord be loosened, and the bowl broken at the Cistern? That my Soul may return to God. This is a pitiful ruinous Cottage, when shall I be brought into the Kings Pallace? In this my Earthly Tabernacle methinks I find now a pin loosened, and a stake taken down, then I say and sigh with the blessed Apostle, 2 Cor. 5. 4. *We which are in this Tabernacle do groan being burdened, not for that we would be unclothed, but cloathed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.* Here's the Soul taking wing to fly into another World.

4. The Christian is made meet for Heaven by intimate familiarity with

Meetness for Heaven. 81

with the God of Heaven : This indeed is the height of a Christians perfection on Earth. The fitter for, and freer intercourse with God, the fitter is that Soul for glory. VVhat is Heaven but the injoyment of God ? The nearer God the nearer Heaven ; for where the King is there is the Court : Truly, saith the Apostle, *Our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.* 1 Jo. 1. 3. Communion with God, and assimilation to God is the life and perfection of our Religion ; and the former leads on to the latter, 2 Cor. 3. 18. *But we all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, as by the spirit of the Lord.* As grace increaseth glory increaseth ; and the vision of God (tho' but through a glass, mightily increaseth grace, and fitteth for glory.

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82 *Meetness for Heaven.*

glory. Now it is said of some great persons, that they have spoken more with God then with Man. Oh faith the Christian, I could not tell how to spend my time if my Soul had not sometime free access to, and intercourse with my best friend above. Oh that it were oftner and longer; [*sed rara hora, brevis mora*] it were a brave resemblance of Heaven to have fixed communion with him; but however I write that day as black and lost wherein God and my Soul are not together. I cannot be content in a publick ordinance when I miss my beloved: I follow him into my Closet, and there usually I find him whom my Soul loveth: O then think I, that God would now stop this breath, and translate my Soul into his immediate presence! That as it is said of *Moses* that he dyed at the mouth or kiss of God, *Dent. 34. 5.*

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Meekness for Heaven. 83

(so some read it) that he was kissed to death, or overpoured with divine embraces : VVould to God it were thus with me ! Methinks I am loath to part with these first-fruits without a full harvest ; now let me go over *Jordan*, and see that goodly Mountain and *Lebanon* : Oh let me not return down into this tempting world, to be banisht again from thee ! O come thou down to me, or take me up to thee : Its pity my Soul should be thus tantalized with the sight of that which I cannot at present enjoy ; well, since it is thy pleasure I am content to be dismounted and descend down to take my lot with the rising Sons of *Adam* ; only I will be stretching out Neck and Arms, and be looking for, and hastening to the coming of my dear Lord. Come Lord Jesus, come quickly : Make hast my beloved, and be thou like to a Roe, or to a young

84 *Meetness for Heaven.*

young Hart upon the mountains of spices.

Object. You will say, such an height of meetness for the Heavenly inheritance as you have described is not practicable or attainable in this life ; if none be saved but such as you have described, woe be to all the world:

Ans^r. 1. Most part of men are not capable of this actual meetness, not having the habitual ; namely, a relation to God, and a principle of saving grace ; and no wonder if unexperienced persons call this Enthusiasm, and unintelligible nonsense, for wisdom is too high for a fool ; its not to be thought strange if some speak evil of that they know not, and turn real experiments into a ridicule : Alas, they have no grace, how then can they exercise it ? How can they evidence a title to Heaven that have none ? How can they dis-

patch.

Meetness for Heaven. 85

patch their work, that never begun it to purpose? Or be mortified to things below, that have their portion in this present life, were never divorced from their lusts, and have no treasure above? We may pity such souls, for Salvation is far from the wicked.

2. But *Wisdom is justified of her Children.* Sanctified souls know what these things mean, and tho' the best complain of their low attainments, yet the weakest sincere Christian can set to his seal, that something of these things he hath found in his bosom as to sincerity, and is aiming at further degrees, and is not content to sit down short of perfection, but is *pressing toward the mark for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* Phil. 3. 14.

3. There's a great difference in Christians attainments in this world. Some active vigorous souls.

86 *Meetness for Heaven.*

souls get nearer to God then others; some are Children, others Fathers, others are young Men, that are strong, and the word of God abides in them, and they have overcome the wicked one, 1 *Joh.* 2. 12, 13, 14. The meanest child God hath in his Family will own and follow his Father, tho' some dare not say, he is my Father: But some are grown up to great intimacy with God, as that choice man of God, Mr. *Holland*, that said on his Death-bed, *Speak it when I am gone, and Preach it at my Funeral, that God deals familiarly with man.*

4. Yet its every ones duty to endeavour after the highest pitch of meetness that is attainable in this life: For as it is the nature of true grace to become deeper and deeper, like the waters in *Ezekiels* vision, and ascend higher and higher, as the flame or rising Sun; so the

Meetness for Heaven. 87

the Christian dare not but obey Gods command to grow in grace, and sees it necessary to comply with our Lords command, *Mat. 24. 44. Therefore be ye also ready.* And this is one reason (amongst the rest which I shall next add,) what a Godly dying Minister of my acquaintance said, *That the best preparation of the best man, is all little enough when we come to dye.* But more of this anon. This is the former head, *What is that meetness for Heaven that Christians must have, or endeavour after.*

C H A P. VII.

Some Reasons propounded why such must be made meet for Heaven here, that hope to be saved hereafter.

TH E second head in the Doctrinal part, is the Reasons of this point, *That all those and only*

88. *Meetness for Heaven.*

only those that shall eternally partake of this Heavenly Inheritance in the other World, are made meet for it in this World : In handling this I shall endeavour not only to evince the truth of it, but convince the Conscience of the necessity of it, and perswade the Affections to comply with it.

1. Its fit persons be made meet, because no man by nature is meet for Heaven. Man is estranged from God, *even from the Womb, Psal. 58. 3.* and are these fit to live with God till brought nigh? Man is shapen and conceived in sin, *Psal. 51. 5.* and is this fit to dwell with an Holy God till sanctified? Man is dead *in trespasses and sins, Eph. 2. 1.* and is such a dead block meet to converse with the living God? Man is *darkness, Eph. 5. 8.* and *what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light*
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Meetness for Heaven. 89

with darkness? 2 Cor. 6. 14. Man by nature is a *child of wrath*, Eph. 2. 3. and how can dried stubble dwell with consuming fire? Alas, we are all enemies to God in our minds, Col. 1. 21. yea, *enmity it self*, Rom. 8. 7. and *can two walk together except they be agreed?* Amos 3. 3. Can the sin-revenging God and the guilty sinner hold intimate correspondence till they be reconciled? O no, it will never be: Heaven and Hell will as soon joyn as God and an unregenerate sinner: Will the holy God take such vipers into his bosom? Can you imagine God will deface or lay aside his immaculate Holiness, to take you from the Swine-sty into his holy Sanctuary? What cleanly person can endure to have a filthy swine a bed and board with him in his Parlour or Bed-chamber? *Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with thee?* Psal.

94. 20. No, no, God is of purer eyes then to behold iniquity, with liking and delight. *Hab. 1. 13.* If God should take men [*a cano ad caelum*] from the dunghil into his Palace, others would conclude that God is reconciled to sin, that its an harmless thing, and not that abominable thing which his Soul hates : No, it can never be ; graceless sinners, so remaining cannot dwell with God. *Psal. 5. 4, 5.*

2. Because this is the divine ordination and appointment, that there should be a connexion betwixt grace and glory, holiness and happiness : *Psal. 84. 11.* As Sin and Hell are joynd by divine commination, so Grace and Heaven are knit together by divine promise. So saith the Text, *Rom. 2. 7, 10.* *To them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honour, and immortality, eternal life.* This is a

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Meetness for Heaven. 91

connexion of grace, not of merit ; of promise, not of debt, yet inviolable, for Gods Justice and Truth are engaged in it. Its fit the infinite God should distribute his Mercies to whom, and upon what termes he pleaseth ; now he hath said peremptorily, *without holiness no man shall see the Lord : Heb. 12. 14.* All things are ordered and wrought after the counsel of his will ; *Eph. 1. 11.* First he chuseth them *before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy : Eph. 1. 4.* They are redeemed to be holy, *Tit. 2. 14.* called with an holy calling, *2 Tim. 1. 9.* and therefore they are holy Brethren that are partakers of this Heavenly calling : *Heb. 3. 1.* Let wicked scoffers mock on to their guilt and cost : Such there are in the world, and such must they be if they think to inherit Heaven : Its Gods ordination :

You

92 *Meetness for Heaven.*

you must be Saints in this world, or never Crowned as Saints in the other ; tho' Canonized for Saints by Men, when gone. Consider sinner, whose word shall stand ? Gods or thine ? Thou hopest to go to Heaven without Saintship, or meetness for it ; God saith it, yea swears it, *Heb. 3. 18.* that thou shalt never enter into his rest. This is Gods counsel, that men must be brought through Sanctification to Salvation, *2 Thess. 2. 13.* and can you think to overturn his appointed VVill, or contradict his Counsels ? Must the Earth be forsaken for thee ? Must the immutable God falsifie his word to save thee against his will, yea, against thy will ? For thou wilt not come to him for life : God will not be merciful to any wicked transgressor : The eternal determination of Heaven is recorded in that chain of Salvation, *Rom. 8. 30.* and

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Meetness for Heaven. 93

and all the Men on Earth and Devils in Hell cannot break one link of it : Predestination, Vocation, Justification, Salvation or Glorification : Go try the turning Day into Night, or VVinter into Summer, or stop the course of the Sun, before thou think to divert the proceedings of grace in the salvation of Souls ; but its vain to attempt either ; for his counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure.

3. This is the design of God in all his Ordinances to make Souls meet for Heaven : *It pleased God by the foolishness of Preaching to save them that believe.* 1 Cor. 1. 21. Ministers and Ordinances were given for perfecting of the Saints. *Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13.* This is the means of Conversion, *the power of God to salvation ; Rom. 1. 16.* the means of edification, of resolution of doubts, consolation and con-

94 *Meetness for Heaven.*

confirmation ; so are the Seals of the Covenant given to this end, to bring Souls onward to this glorious Inheritance. Now, Sirs, consider, shall you receive this grace of God in vain ? Shall all the Ordinances be lost upon you ? You must give account of Sabbaths, Sermons, Sacraments, shall they be the favour of death unto death to you, or the favour of life unto life ? Alas, how do poor Ministers toyl and travel, pray and watch, weep and sigh, to the breaking of their Loyns, spending of their Spirits, to bring you to God and Heaven, and you pretend kindness to us, but have no real kindness to your own Souls, we dare not but warn you in the name of Christ, lest you fail of the grace of God, and fall short of this Inheritance : *We watch for your Souls as those that must give an account : O let us do it with joy and*

not

Meetness for Heaven. 95

not with grief. Heb. 13. 17. If it be uncomfortable to us, it will be unprofitable to you? Must our sweat and labour be in vain? But it will not be in vain to us, for our work is with the Lord, we shall not lose our reward: God will pay the Nurse, though the Child dye: Our Crown will be given us, if we be faithful, though we be not successful, for that's in Gods hands: But woe be to those souls that have sitten under powerful Ordinances, and miss of this Inheritance! O woe, woe to you, you cannot miss of Heaven, but be plunged into a deeper Hell: O ease our Hearts, and save your own Souls: Kill us, and damn your selves; nay, murder your selves, and you again Crucifie Christ, whose person we represent: Rather give us leave to espouse you to one Husband, [*ἡμεῖς αὐτὸν*], I have fitted you, as things

96 *Meetness for Heaven.*

things that are pieced together, glued or soldered, let us do so with you,] *that we may present you as chaste virgins in Christ, 2 Cor. 11. 2.* Would to God this were the fruit of our labours.

4 This is the design of all Gods Providential dispensations : Mercies, afflictions, smiles, frowns, come upon this errand to make Souls meet for Heaven : Cords of love draw, rods of wrath drive the poor sinner from Hell to Heaven : The Sunshine of Love comes to melt and thaw our frozen hearts that God may set a stamp upon us : The loving kindness of God leads to Repentance. *Rom. 2. 4.* Oh what an influence will Gods native goodness have upon an ingenuous Spirit. As the Sun attracts vapours from the Earth, so this Son of Righteousness should and will (if our sturdy hearts hinder not) raise our hearts Heavenwards.

Meectress for Heaven. 97

wards. Its pity we should stop here in the streams, but that thereby we should be led to the fountain, and follow the beams up to the Sun : May this long-suffering of the Lord be your salvation : 2 Pet. 3. 15. May love constrain you to love God : May these load-stones so attract you, and these grapes of *Canaan* enamour you, that you may never rest till you appear before God in *Zion* : And what are all Gods rods and redoubled strokes for, but to awaken you out of security ? Beat your fingers off from the world ? Weaken your corruptions, and purge and furbish your Souls, as vessels for the high shelf of glory ? *For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory ;* 2 Cor. 4. 17. How is that ? Surely by working the Soul into a fitness for that glory. This

Furnace

98 *Meetress for Heaven.*

furnace melts away the dross of our Spirit. Sea-tossings clear the liquor of grace ; this dark night fits for the pleasant morning ; these pangs prepare us for deliverance ; these blustering storms fit souls for the peaceable fruits of righteousness, being sanctified by the Spirit, and improved by Faith. Affliction is Gods Physick, which makes sick, but prepares for sweet health ; and shall we frustrate Gods ends in this also ? What, are you content with a Heaven here, and an Hell hereafter ? Nay can you be content with an Hell in both worlds ? Must these be par-boilings for everlasting burnings ? God forbid. Look at the Lords end in these sufferings, and let it be yours.

5. The time of this life is the only time men have given them to be made meet for Heaven. This life is a *praludium* to an eternal state :

Meetness for Heaven. 99

state : Its a Seminary for another world. *Gal. 6. 7, 8.* —*Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap : He that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption ; but he that soweth to the spirit, shall of the spirit reap life everlasting.* Seeding is a preparatory to reaping ; yet men must expect only to reap that kind of grain that's sown ; none can think to reap Wheat that sowed Oats ; and you know there's more abundance in the reaping then in the sowing : So in this case, Hell torments will be more exquisite and eternal, then the profit and pleasure of the sinner in sinning : Heavens joys will infinitely surmount the Christians labours and sorrows in this world ; and there is great equity in both, for the object sinned against is infinite, and satisfaction can never be made by a finite Creature ; and the grace, from

100 *Meetress for Heaven.*

whence flows Eternal Life, is infinite, and will have an endless duration : But the point I am upon is to demonstrate the necessity of making meet for Heaven in this world, or it will never be done: Now or never. When the door is shut, the gulf fixt, and the Soul loosed from the Body, and launcht out into that vast ocean of Eternity, there's no returning back to get the oyl of grace, or be firing the Soul for another world : *Eccl.* 9. 10. *Whatsoever thine hand findeth to do, do it with thy might ; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.* Time lasts not, but floats away apace ; but what is everlasting depends upon it. [*Hic aut accepimus, aut amittimus vitam eternam*] In this world we either win or lose eternal Life : The great weight of Eternity hangs on the small and twittered

Meets for Heaven. 101

twittered thread of time : *Now is the accepted time ; now is the day of salvation : 2 Cor. 6. 2* This is our working day, our market time ; surely it becomes us to lay that Foundation well, that bears such a Superstructure : To cast that Anchor safe'y that is entrusted with a Vessel so richly laden ; Oh Sirs, sleep now, and awake in Hell, from whence is no redemption. Suppose by misdemeanour you had forfeited your Estate and Life, and upon much intercession, the King causeth an Hour-glass to be turned, and set you a work to do, or lesson to learn ; if you performed it you are pardoned and promoted, if not, tortured and executed : Oh how diligent would you be ! What pains would you take ? The case is your own, Sirs, Heaven and Hell are before you ; according to your improvement or non-improvement of this hour of life,

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life, so must you fare ; dream not of a Purgatory ; *as the Tree falls so it lyes* : You enter by death into an unchangeable state, only the Body at the Resurrection will be joyned to the Soul to be partner with it in weal or woe, blifs or bane for ever. The state here is [*tempus operis*] the time of working ; hereafter [*mercedis*] of reward : Oh look, before you leap into another world. That's the fifth Reason.

6. The Christian must be made meet here for the Inheritance above, because he hath abundance of work to do, and priviledges to injoy, in order to the full possession of this blessed Inheritance above : We have many graces to exercise, duties to perform, corruptions to subdue, temptations to resist, burdens to bear, mercies to improve, that will never be managed to purpose without a qualification for
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managing them : And observe it, the same disposition is requisite for making a Christian meet for any duty, that's requisite to make him meet for glory ; the same habitual principle, and drawing it forth into lively exercise : Not only must the man of God be perfect, *thoroughly furnished unto all good works ; 2 Tim. 3. 17.* but every Christian, that is a vessel unto honour, must be sanctified and so meet for his Masters use, *and prepared unto every good work : 2 Tim. 2. 21.* Alas, an un sanctified heart is unfit for spiritual service. *Solomon saith, The legs of the lame are not equal, [he halts and goes limping] so is a parable in the mouth of fools : Prov. 26. 7.* How awkwardly and bunglingly doth he go to work in sacred things ; just as an unskilful person handles a Lute, a Viol, or Instrument of Musick : or as the men of *Ephraim* could not frame

to pronounce *Shibboleth* aright :
Judg. 12. 6. There must be a suitability betwixt the Agent and Acts : No carnal heart can do any one good work well ; materially he may do what is good, but not formally as good ; in a good manner, for a good end ; acceptably to God, or profitably to himself :
For they that are in the flesh cannot please God ; and without faith its impossible to please God. Rom. 8. 8.
Heb. 11. 6. And can we think God will carry them to Heaven that never struck a right stroke, or never did one hours work for God, that he would accept ? A graceless sinner is like the fruitless Vine tree, *Ezek.* 15. 3, 4, 5. that is not meet for any work, but it is cast into the fire for fuel ; just so is that branch (that's professionally) in Christ, that beareth not fruit, *its taken away, - and cast into the fire and burned. Joh.* 15. 2. - 6.
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Meetness for Heaven. 105

The Divine Wisdom is seen in suiting means to the end, object to the faculty, back to the burden: Now graceless sinners are not fit for Gods work, and if they be not fit in this world, they will never be fit.

2. The Christian hath many privileges to enjoy which he must be meet for even in this world, as Reconciliation, Justification, Adoption, Joy in the Holy Ghost, Peace of Conscience, Communion with God, Audience of Prayers, &c. All these God hath promised, Christ hath purchased for his Children, and they are Childrens bread, and must not be given to dogs: God will not throw away his Mercies on such as value them not, but scorn them; they set light by precious delicacies of his Table, *Mat.* 22. 5. The whole sight the Physician: *Mat.* 9. 12. The full soul loaths the honey-comb: The carnal heart will not thank God for

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pardon and grace ; and can we think God will force his Blessings on such ungrateful miscreants, that scorn both him and his kindness ? No surely, there are some that long for these Blessings, and will thankfully accept them : See *Acts* 13. 46, 48. and 28. 28. Yea, he will make you prize them, and part with all for them, or you shall never have them : What think you, doth not the great God take care to secure his own glory, as well as Mans felicity ? And would it not be dishonourable to God to bestow his richest treasures and pleasures of grace on such as despise them, and take more pleasure in rooting in the sordid dunghil of sensual delights, then in seeking first the Kingdom of God, which consists in *righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.* *Rom.* 14. 17. Alas, *Honour is not seemly for a fool : Prov.* 26. 1. *As a Jewel*

Meetness for Heaven. 107

Jewel of Gold in a swines snout, so is a fair Woman without discretion. Prov. 11. 22. These silly fools are not meet to sit as Princes with the King at his Table, because they want a Wedding-garment of suitable disposition for so high a privilege. Mat. 22. 12.

C H A P. VIII.

Another Reason drawn from the necessary consistency of a Christians meetness for so glorious an Inheritance.

7. **T**HE last Reason why souls must be made meet for Heaven is, because otherwise there would be no consistency or suitable harmony betwixt men and glory: If their natures be not changed, they will not have a suitableness of disposition to the glorious state above. The truth of this I shall de-

108 *Meetness for Heaven.*

demonstrate in these 4 particulars.

1. None but persons made meet for Heaven will have any mind to leave the world, and go to God. A carnal unconverted soul is totally unwilling to go hence; they fancy to themselves an Eternity below: *Their inward thought is, that their houses shall endure for ever: Psal. 49. 11.* Yea, themselves; for they put far from them the evil day, and sing a *requiem* to themselves, as the fool in the Gospel; and no wonder, for they live by sense, and know what they have here, but know not what they must have hereafter: As the old doting Monk, that shewed his brave accommodations, saying, *These things make us unwilling to dye.* It was an usual saying among the Heathens, [*soli Christiani sunt mortis contemptores*] that Christians only are contempters of death: This is applicable to sincere Christians.

Stoical

Meetress for Heaven. 109

Stoical apathy will not do it, but Faith will. *Julius Palmer*, the Martyr, said, *To them that have their Souls linked to the Flesh, like a Rogues foot to a pair of stocks, it is indeed hard to dye; but for him who is able to separate Soul and Body by the help of Gods Spirit; it is no more mastery for such a one to dye, then for me to drink this cup of Beer: Nay, when the Christian is upon good terms with God, he desires to be loosed or dissolved and to be with Christ, Phil. 1. 23.* Yea, this is the disposition of a Soul meet for Heaven, that he loves and longs for Christs appearing; *2 Tim. 4. 8.* but the sincere Christian that is not actually meet for Heaven, (though through grace he be habitually meet) often shrugs at the approach of death, and is glad to chide himself out, and say as that holy man, [*Egredere mea Anima, egredere,*] *Go out, my Soul,*

110 *Meetness for Heaven.*

Soul, go out, what art thou afraid of? And surely that man is more acceptable to God, and comfortable in death, that hath set all things streight, and hath nothing to do, but surrender his Soul into Gods hands; this man will make his Lord welcome any hour of the day, or watch of the night; but the other is like a Maid undrest and unready, though for the main she love her Friend, and desire his coming, yet in the present juncture and under those circumstances, she is surprized and troubled that he should find her in that pitiful pickle. This is the case of the unmeet Christian.

2. None but Souls meet for Heaven are fit for death, through which all must pass. *It is true, the Apostle doth discover to us this mystery, (which among the rest he might receive in the third Heavens,) 1 Cor. 15. 51. We shall not*
all

Meetness for Heaven. III

all sleep, but we shall all be changed; but this change is a peculiar dispensation in the end of the world, and this change is equivalent to death. This is certain, the fruit of the curse, the sting of death will fasten her fangs on the unconverted soul, that's under the covenant of works, and is not in Christ: Its only the sincere Christian that can sing that [ἐμνύμαον,] the Song of Triumph; or can make that brave challenge, 1 Cor. 15. 56, 57. O death where is thy sting! O grave where is thy victory? Only our Captain Jesus hath disarmed death, and it is only for his members; others are left to its rage: Death feeds on them; Psal. 49. 14. it hath a full morsel of them. The first death kills the Body, and the second death damns the Soul; but blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first Resurrection, on such the second death hath

no

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no power. *Rev. 20. 6.* Oh happy state of real Saints ! Christ, our *David*, hath conquered this *Goliath* : The Ark of the Covenant hath driven back this swelling *Jordan* : [*Tollitur mors non ne sit, sed ne obfit ;*] This Serpent may hiss and hit, not hurt ; strike down it may, not strike home ; it may thrust Gods Children into the Grave, not into Hell : Nay, our Lord sets his, not only above the danger by death, but fears of death, that are thus meet for Heaven ; *Heb. 2. 14, 15.* that can say, as that gracious Gentlewoman, a Martyr, written by me *Anne Askew*, that neither wisheth for death, nor feareth his might, and as merry as one that's bound for Heaven : But oh the woful state of a graceless sinner ! that is in Natures state, and loves and lives in sin, lyes and dyes in the old *Adam*. That's the saddest word
in

in all the Bible, pronounced twice in a breath by our blessed Lord, *Joh. 8. 21, 24. Ye shall dye in your sins, i. e. under the guilt of your sins and sentence of condemnation* : This is surprizing from what he adds in the first place, *whither I go you cannot come* ; that is to Heaven, whither sinners cannot enter : You'l say, then no man can enter into Heaven, for all men are sinners even to the last breath. When are men cleansed, is it [*in Articulo*

mortis ; in the passage of the Soul out of the Body? May not all be cleansed alike then? *Ans.* Its true all are sin-

In Answer to this question. see 3 Opinions in Dr. Tuckney. *Theses & Præf. Theol. ubi videtur præclare surius disputata* p. 269. ad p. 292.

ning to the last gasp of breathing out their Souls ; but

1. You must distinguish betwixt a state of sin, and having sin.

fin : The best have relicks of Original corruption as long as they live : The death of the body will only annihilate the body of death : Death is not properly the punishment, but period of fin : It reigus not in Gods Children at present, it shall not remain in them when dead : The guilt of fin is already gone, *for there's no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8. 1.* and the filth, yea, being of fin is taken away, as soon as death strikes the stroke.

2. I see not but the mighty God can perfectly expel fin out of the Soul, and also perfect defective graces in the instant of the Souls separation from the Body, as well as he did infuse a principle of grace into the Soul in an instant at the Souls first conversion ; for by death *the spirits of just men are made perfect ; Heb. 12. 23.* Mind it, it is just men not wicked ; God will

will not infuse grace into men ordinarily in their passage out of the world ; [*qualis vita, finis ita* ;] as men live, so they dye ; and if men imagine God will put another principle into their hearts just as they pass out of this World ; as this is a daring presumption, so they will be mistaken ; for how is a departing Soul capable of such receptions or reflections as are necessary in the work of conversion ? Alas, the Eyes being set, Lips quivering, Memory failing, and the Body in a cold sweat, is unfit for any thing ; their hopes giving up the ghost as their breaths depart ; and its a wonder that the Souls of wicked men go quietly out of their Bodies ; its strange they depart not as the Devils out of the Demonaicks rending, raging, tearing, foming ; but if Conscience be asleep, death will awake it ; could you follow their
de-

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departing Souls a minute out of their Bodies, you would hear howlings and roarings.

3. Heaven will not receive any Souls but such as are made meet for it on Earth. *Rev. 21. 27. There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, — for without are dogs. Rev. 22. 15.* They say *Ireland* will not brook a Toad, a Snake or venomous Creature to live and like in it : I am sure Heaven will not admit, but cast out an unsanctified heart. The Legions of apostate Angels knew this, who abode not one moment in that holy place after they left their innocency. It is said of the Halcyons nest, that it will hold nothing but its own Bird : The same may be said of Heaven ; the Serpent could wind himself into the Earthly Paradise, but none of the Serpentine brood shall once peep into this Heavenly

Meetress for Heaven. 117

Heavenly Paradise. For

(1) The Text saith, *It is an Inheritance*; now an Inheritance is for none but Children; its true all Gods Children are heirs, *Rom. 8. 17.* but none shall inherit Heaven except Children: By nature we are Children of Wrath; by grace and adoption Children of God. All Gods Children are begot again, *to a lively hope for this incorruptible inheritance. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.*

(2.) *Its the inheritance of Saints, i. e. of holy sanctified Souls.* Persons must not think that Heaven is like *Mahomets* Paradise, where there is delicious fare, pleasant gardens, fair women, and all sensual delights, fit lettice for an Epicures Lips. No, no, Heaven is a state of perfect, immediate and perpetual injoyment of God, suited to the raised faculties of a sanctified Soul.

(3.) *Its*

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(3.) *Its the inheritance of Saints in light.* Its a bright and lightsome state, suited to seeing Souls; blind sinners can see no beauty there; such as are not changed from darkness to light are not fit for that state; see *Acts* 26. 18. Alas, a blind man can take no content in beautiful objects, though the Sun shine never so gloriously. Heaven and light are synonymous; but light and darkness are directly contrary: *If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lye and do not the truth;* 1 *Joh.* 1. 6. and such dark sinners are far from a suitableness to this state and place of light. O therefore poor sinners consider this, the holy God hates all the workers of iniquity; the holy Heaven is no sanctuary for Rebels and Traytors; God will not take such vipers into his bosom; thou must either be renewed or never received

Meekness for Heaven. 119

ed into glory ; it is an undefiled inheritance, 1 *Pet.* 1. 4. a dirty sinner must not enter ; this would disparage and contradict all Gods Attributes, as his Justice , then God should give to the wicked according to the work of the righteous ; it would blemish his Holiness, as though unclean were delighted in equally with the clean ; it would contradict his Truth, as though God regarded not what he said or swore, that no unclean thing shall enter there : Every Attribute would have dirt cast upon it, if God should save the unsanctified Soul : Nay, it contradicts the undertakings of Jesus Christ, who came to save his people from their sins, not in their sins : It exposeth the office and operations of the Holy Ghost, whose office it is to sanctifie sinners, and prepare Souls for Heaven ; that sinner must surely be in a desperate case that must

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un-God the infinite Jehovah, God blessed for ever, or else he cannot be saved.

4. The unsanctified sinner would by no means like in Heaven. Heaven would be an Hell to him, except his Nature were changed and renewed. Most Men mistake the nature of Heaven; they only look upon it as a place of happiness; it is so, but withal it is a state of perfect holiness: They are holy priviledges, injoyment of God, and what care wicked men for his company? They say unto God, depart from us; and their choice shall be their punishment: They are holy joys and delights; how will they like that who were never pleased but with sensual laughter, which is madness? There's holy company above of Saints, but they cannot abide to be near them on Earth, how then can they like to be associated to them in Heaven?

There

Mectness for Heaven. 121

There is holy imployment above, but alas, they are not at all qualified for, nor can they be delighted in the work of loving, praising, or taking pleasure in God. *Augustine* hath a saying, [*Canticum novum & vetus homo male concordant.*] That the new Song and old Man agree not well together: — No man could learn that new Song, but the hundred forty four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth. *Rev.* 14. 3. Alas, they have not hearts nor harps tuned for it. Suppose it were possible that our Lord should bring an unsanctified person to Heaven, saith one, he could take no more felicity there, then a beast, if you should bring him into a beautiful room, to the society of learned Men, or a well furnisht Table; when as the poor thing would much rather be grazing with his fellow bruits; thus a poor graceless sinner would rather

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ther

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ther be with his Cups or Queans,
at best in his Markets, and counting
his Bags, but there's no such
things in Heaven ; therefore if he
were there, he would be quite out
of his Element ; [*tanquam Piscis
in arido*] as a Fish in the Air, or a
Bird in the Water, or Fire ? Can
you charm a Beast with Musick ?
Or can you bring him to your me-
lody, or make him keep time with
your skilful quire ? So the An-
thems of Heaven, saith one, fit
not a carnal mans mouth, suit not
his ear : Poor wretches, they now
think Sermons long, Sabbaths
long, Prayers and Praises long,
and cry, what a weariness is it ?
When will it be over ? And are
these think you, fit for this Hea-
venly employment to all Eternity ?
where this noble company of Ce-
lestial inhabitants, *serve God day
and night in the Temple. Rev 7.15.*
Alas, the poor unregenerate sinner
hath

Meetness for Heaven. 123

hath no faculties suited to such a glorious state and work, as that above is; the Mind, Will, Memory and Conscience, are like a full stomach that loaths the honey-comb: These old Bottles cannot hold the new Wine of glory: You may as well hew the Marble without Tools, or draw a Picture without Colours, or build without Instruments or Materials, as a Soul not qualified with Grace can do the work of God acceptably either on Earth or in Heaven Oh, Sirs, think of this, you must be prepar'd, fitted, qualified for Heaven here, or else Heaven will be no Heaven to you.

C H A P. IX.

An use of conviction and lamentation over Souls that are unmeet for Heaven.

I Now proceed to Application, and all the Uses I shall make

of this point shall be of Lamentation and Exhortation.

1. Of Conviction, Humiliation, Lamentation. A man would think upon such plain demonstrations as are oft laid before sinners in the ministry of the Word, they would once at last reflect upon themselves and say, am I thus or thus qualified? Upon what terms stand I for another world? Am I an adopted child of God? Am I justified? Am I converted to God, and brought through the pangs of regeneration? Have I made a covenant with God, and taken God for my God, and given my self to him? What saving work hath passed upon my heart? If I should come to you one by one, and pose you with this solemn question, Friends whither bound? Whither are you going? Are you for Heaven or Hell? Oh no, you'll say, God forbid, but that we shall go to

Meetness for Heaven. 125

to Heaven ! God is a merciful God ; Christ dyed to save sinners ; we do not doubt but through the merits of Christ, we shall be saved as well as others : Alas, Sirs, these are too general grounds, to build your hopes of Salvation upon. God is merciful, but he is also just ; Christ dyed for sinners, but do you imagine all shall be saved by him ? Let me ask you a few sober questions, and answer them not according to your fancies, but according to Scripture rule : Do you believe that all men shall be saved ? What is Hell then for, that's so oft mention'd in the Bible ? Or do you think that the gates of Heaven are as wide as the gates of Hell, or that as many shall be saved as damned ? Dare you so directly contradict our blessed Saviour, and give him the lye ? *Mat.* 7 13, 14. Can you imagine that our Lord Jesus (who is the door-

126 *Meekness for Heaven.*

keeper of Heaven) will admit any but those that he saith he will entertain? Or do you think he will admit those that he saith he will keep out? What think you, can any secretly steal in unknown to him, or forcibly thrust in against his will? Is the infinite all-seeing God grown so weak or blind that you can couzen or conquer him? Or can you bribe him to let you in with fair words or large gifts? Or dare you stand to plead in his face that you are qualified and meet for Heaven, when he tells you, that you are not? Do you think there is such a thing as a groundless presumption, or rotten hope that will give up the ghost? Is not the Devil a cheat? Are not your hearts treacherous? And are not they fools that trust these, and will not try by the word what they affirm? And have you solemnly and faithfully tryed your title to Heaven?

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Have you not taken all for granted without a serious proving of your state, meerly because you would have it so? And are you content to do so in temporals? And will you madly venture your immortal Souls on such grounds as you dare not try? And can you think to escape the strict tryal of the omniscient God? Sirs, the business is important; Heaven and Hell depend upon it: We Ministers that believe an Eternity, and certainly know upon what terms Souls are saved, dare not but be faithful to you, and declare the whole counsel of God.

I must, 1. Tell you who those are that are far off Salvation, and are utterly unmeet for this Inheritance, and can pretend no claim to it. 2. Such as pretend a claim, but its groundless, and but a pretended claim, and cannot be made out on Scripture grounds.

G. 4.

1. Their

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1. Their are a sort of persons within the pale of the visible Church, (for I here meddle not with Heathens or Jews) that are [*ipso facto*] point-blank excluded, in as plain terms as can be spoken. These are a sort of sinners that carry the black brand in their foreheads, of whom a man may say without breach of charity, these carry visibly the doleful tokens of eternal death and damnation. View two catalogues of these, one is in 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. *Know ye not [i. e. Methinks you cannot plead ignorance in so notorious a case so oft inculcated,] that (1.) the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God : [i. e. That grind the poor, over-reach their brethren, when they have them at advantage, God is the avenger of such,* 1 Thess. 4. 6. therefore not the rewarder with Heaven.

(2.) Neither Fornicators shall inherit

Meetness for Heaven, 129

inherit the Kingdom of God. Such filthy goats must be set at Gods left hand. This sin [as venial a sin as its reckoned by some] is damning, and excludes men from Heaven. Do you think such dirty dogs shall ever trample on this golden pavement? when God would not suffer even the price of a whore or dog to come into his house. *Dent. 23. 18.*

(3.) Nor Idolaters, gross, or more refined; for God will not permit his children to keep company, or familiarly converse with such on Earth, *1 Cor. 5. 11.* and therefore shall not be associated to them in the other world, and God is not well pleased with such. *1 Cor. 10. 5, 7.*

(4.) Nor Adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, shall inherit the Kingdom of God, such filthy *Sodomites* shall rather have fire from

G. 5 Heaven,

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Heaven, then be admitted into that holy place. These horrible acts of filthiness are not fit to be named among Saints, and surely the committers of them cannot be entertained among Saints : See *Eph. 5 3, 4. They are given up, Rom. 1. 24.*

(5.) Nor Thieves. Not only open robbers by the high-way, or breakers of houses, but gamsters that cheat others, or purloyning wastful Servants, deceitful Traders, or wilful Bankrupts, that basely get others Estates into their hands and never intend to pay their just debts : These men, without restitution, shall have their ill-gotten silver and gold to torment them like burning mettall in their bowels. *Jam. 5. 2, 3.*

(6.) Nor Covetous. These are fitly joyned to Thieves, that run out with inordinate affection to the world, and suck her breasts with

with great delight ; that inlarge their desires as Hell : These must be shut out of Heaven, for they have their portion in this present life, *Psal. 17. 14.* and are real Idolaters. *Col. 3. 5. Eph. 5. 5.* These must be banished Heaven.

(7.) Nor Drunkards. Not only such as bruitise themselves, and drink away their Reason, but such as sit long at it, continue till wine inflame them ; yea though they be not intoxicated, yet they purchase a woe to themselves, that are *mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink.* *Isa. 5. 11, 22.*

(8.) Nor Revilers. These are properly annexed to drunkards ; for the godly are usually the drunkards song, that scoff and jeer at serious godliness, and break their scurrilous jests upon the holiest Saints ; but there's no railing among Angels or Saints in Heaven,

Jude 9.

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Jude 9. nor shall such come there:
And one would think they do not
desire to come there, with those
they so abuse.

(9.) I may add Backbiters, that
love to take up and blaze abroad a
false report against their Neigh-
bours; these are excluded Gods
Tabernacle, *Psal.* 15. 1, 3. that
fling all the dirt they can in the face
of such as do them no hurt, wound-
ing them secretly with a privy stab,
or behind their backs; God will
hold the door of Heaven against
such.

(10.) Swearers, that prophane
the glorious and tremendous name
of the eternal God by horrible
oaths, curses and execrations:
Blasphemers of old were to be put
to death, and if men now spare
them, the flying roll of curses shall
go out against such, and cut them
off, *Zech.* 5. 2, 3, 4. *Those that
swear fall into condemnation. Jam.*
5. 12.

(11.) Ly-

Meetness for Heaven. 133

(11.) Lyars, that invent or utter lies upon any account whatsoever; these carry their own doom in their Consciences, and they may read the doleful sentence in *Rev.* 21. 27. *There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, -or maketh a lye.* The God of truth hateth lyars, and will banish them from his court, as *David* did. *Psal.* 101. 7.

(12.) Apostates, that once made a fair shew, but are renegadoes to the truth, way, people, worship of God; they bring a great reproach on Religion; and our blessed Saviour pronounceth such as put their hand to the plow and look back, to be unfit for the kingdom of God; *Luk.* 9. 62. *Gods soul will have no pleasure in them.* *Heb.* 10. 38. Oh the dreadful end of these that turn their backs on Christ. *2 Pet.* 2. 20, 21.

Hearken, you sinners, if any
of

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of you be of this number, read and tremble, there's no room for you in this glorious City above, you must be shut out : Living and dying in this estate there's no more mercy for you then for the Devils : Heaven is shut against you, Hell is open for you : How can you escape the damnation of Hell? *Mat. 23. 33.* Alas, you are daily filling up the measure of your sins ; the Ephah is well nigh full ; t'other sin, t'other neglect more, and next news you may hear, the talent of Lead may be cast upon the mouth of the Ephah, and thy Soul carried into thine own place : *Zach. 5. 7, 9.* One Oath more, one Lye more, one fit of Drunkenness more, and thy iniquity is full, thy Soul is gone. Who can tell but God may say to thee as to the rich man, *Luke 12. 29.* *This night shall thy Soul be required of thee :* Or as the word [*ἀπαίρεσις*] they, that is the Devils

Meetness for Heaven. 135

Devils shall require thy Soul. Oh how greedily are infernal Fiends watching for a commission to break, thy neck in thy travelling, or to strangle thee in thy bed, and hurry thee headlong into Hell with them! Thy iniquity is filling up; the sunshine of prosperity ripens it apace; the sweet rain of Gospel Ordinances brings Weeds to perfection as well as Corn. As Gods children are making meet for Heaven, thou art making meet for Hell. *Rom. 9. 22, 23.* *What if God willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering, the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: [κατησκευαστα]* Made up, made ready, like sticks dried and bundled up to be cast into the fire. It is not said that God fits them for destruction, as its said, *ver. 22.* of the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory: No, no, there needs

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needs no more to a sinners making meet for Hell, but a leaving him to himself ; he will fall apace downwards to damnation with his own weight. Ah sinner, thou little knowest how soon thy foot may slip off this slippery battlement on which thou standest, into the precipice of eternal destruction. Little dost thou know how soon that flaming sword that hangs over thy head by the twine-thred of thy natural Life, may fall upon thee and separate Soul and Body, and follow this stroke of vengeance into the other world. Methinks thou shouldst not eat nor drink, nor sleep quietly in this so dangerous, damnable estate. Every sin thou committest is a *treasuring up unto thy self wrath against the day of wrath.* Rom. 2. 5. Look to't, the Judge standeth before the door; Death is ready to lay its cold hand of arrest upon thee : There's but
a step

Meekness for Heaven. 137

a step betwixt you and death ;
and that door that lets you out of
time sets you in eternal torments ;
and are you taking long strides to
Hell ? Shall you not be there soon
enough ? Can you not sink your
selves low enough ? Must you
needs add drunkenness to thirst ?
Impenitency to your sin ? Alas,
you love to wander, you hate to
be reformed ; yea, you hate in-
struction, and cast his words be-
hind you. *Psal. 50. 17.* Ministers
follow you from the Lord with
tears, intreaties, arguments to per-
swade, and means to direct, and
willingness to assist you the best
they can in your preparations for
a future state, but you are shy of
conversing with them ; you con-
ceal your state from them ; they
spend their time in studying to do
you good ; they spend their Lungs
in speaking to you, in speaking to
God for you, but all doth no good,
they

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they cannot be heard till it be too late; no warning will serve. Men say as that evil Servant, *My Lord delayeth his coming*—so begin to eat and drink with the drunken : Let them know, the Lord of that Servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of ; and shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. *Mat. 24. 48, 49, 50. 51.*

C H A P. X.

An Answer to the Objection of vain pretenders to a meetness for Heaven.

Obj. **B**UT some may say, you speak terrible things against the prophane, but I bless God, I am none of those, my case is better then those before described,

ed, I carry fairly in my Conversation, none can challenge me for the foresaid gross enormities, I keep Church, hear Sermons, pray as well as God gives me grace, none are perfect, I hope God for Christs sake will pardon my defects; I repent of my sins from the bottom of my heart, and believe in Christ, and do as well as I can; God help us, we are all sinners; God will not be so severe as you say: I hope I shall go to Heaven as well as others.

Answer. Its not as I say, or you say, but as God himself saith; do I say any thing but what the holy God saith in the Bible? Object against it and disprove it; but must not the Word of God judge you another day? Hath he not told us in his infallible word who shall be saved, and who shall be damned; and will you believe God or your own self deluding hearts? Besides,
I stand

I stand upon habitual meetness chiefly : What art thou man in point of state ? Art thou a child of God or a child of the Devil ? Tell not me that thou hast done this or that good work, but art thou savingly converted from sin to God ? Hast thou that renovation that necessarily accompanies Salvation ? This I have spoken to.

But that which I shall briefly hint at, is to tell you that many go as far as *Kadesh-barnea*, that reach not *Canaan* : Many go far, that dye in the Wilderness ; and set out fair, yea hold on long, that yet never obtain this Heavenly Inheritance. *Strive to enter in at the strait gate, saith our Lord, for many I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.* Luke 13. 24.

1. You say you carry it fairly and live civilly : Alas, civil Righteousness and abstaining from gross
sins

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sinners will not do. *Abimelech* an Heathen was an exact Moralist, *Gen.* 20. 6. *Paul* unconverted was blameless. *Phil.* 3. 6. These were not Saints nor fit for Heaven.

2. You say you keep Church, attend on Ordinances, hear the best Preachers, so did those that heard Christ himself, *Luk.* 13. 26. yet at last are rejected with an [*I know you not*]; so did they. *Ezek.* 33. 31, 32.

3. You say you Pray, and perform many Religious duties, so did the *Jews* of old that were stark naught, and rejected; *Isa.* 58. 1, 2. so did the *Pharisees*, in *Luk.* 18. 11, 12. Some have the form but want the power of godliness; *2 Tim.* 3. 5. these are lifeless blocks.

4. You say you own the Orthodox Faith, and are not guilty of Heresie; so did they *Rom.* 2. 24, 28. Creeds make not Christians. A sound head and unsound heart

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heart may be companions. The Scribe answered discreetly and orthodoxly, *Mark* 12. 34. and was not far from the Kingdom of God, but never came into it.

5. You say you have honest purposes and endeavours ; yea, some attainments in growing better and mending what's amiss ; its well ; but *Saul* said, *1 Sam.* 16. 21. *I will no more do thee harm ;* yea, *Herod* reformed and did many things. *Mar.* 6. 20. All this is good, but not good enough for Heaven.

6. You say, but my reformations were begun and attended with strong convictions, and troubles of Conscience ; but this will be no good evidence, for *Cain* had great terrors ; *Gen.* 4. 14. *Felix* had his tremblings ; *Acts* 24. 25. yea, *The damned Devils* believe and tremble. *Jam.* 2. 19.

7. But I repent of my sins you'll say, and mourn sore : I reply,
hast

Mectress for Heaven. 143

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Felix
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believe
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epley,
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hast thou considered well whether
it be a worldly sorrow that work-
eth death, or a godly sorrow that
worketh repentance to Salvation?
2 Cor. 7. 10. *Saul* wept sore;
Ahab humbled himself; *Esau*
sought the blessing with tears; *Heb.*
12. 17. *Judas* repented himself;
Mat. 27. 3. yet all short.

8. You say, but I associate with
Gods people, am well accounted
of, can have testimonials under the
hands of eminent Ministers, Chri-
stians. I answer, so high did the
foolish Virgins attain, they had
Lamps, Oyl in them, waited for
the Bridegroom, yet the door was
barr'd upon them, with an [*I know*
you not.] *Mat.* 15. 1.-12. Some
have a name to live, *but are dead.*
Rev. 3. 1.

9. But God hath given me no-
table gifts of memory, knowledge,
utterance in discoursing, praying,
which surely he will not reject. I
answer,

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answer, so had they *Mat. 7. 21, 22, 23.* gifts of Preaching, Miracles, yet even these meet with an [*I never knew you.*] Gifts and grace are different things. See *1 Cor. 13. 1, 2, 3.*

10. But I have grace, I have the grace of faith, love, good desires. I answer, *Simon Magus* also believed, and was baptized, yet had neither part nor lot in this matter, for his heart was not right in the sight of God. *Act. 8. 13. 21.* There is a feigned as well as unfeigned faith, a dissembled love, unsound desires, legal repentance.

11. But I have put forth myself in extraordinary acts of Piety, zeal for Religion, Reformation, sufferings for God: I doubt not but this inheritance belongs to me. I answer, all this thou mayst do, and be no Candidate for Heaven. *John* was a great reformer, yet a rotten-hearted hypocrite. *2 Kin.*

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10. 16, 28. Young *Joash* was so zealous for a season. 2 *Chron.* 24. 4, 17. What strict observers of the Sabbath were the Scribes and Pharisees? *Luk.* 11. 42. 13, 14, 15.

12. You'll say further, Oh but I have assurance of my good estate, and not only so, but some joy and peace of Conscience, which are as so many foretastes and prelibations of my future happiness. I answer, its well, but see to it that they be of the right stamp; the stony-ground hearers anon with joy receive the word. *Mat.* 13. 20. *Balaam* had brave raptures in hearing the words of God, seeing the vision of the Almighty, and beholding the glory of Gods people *Israel*, he fell into a trance. *Num.* 24. 4, 5, 16, 17. and there are that taste of the word of God, and powers of the world to come. *Heb.* 6. 5, 6. yet such may fall away irrecoverably. Oh how many catch

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at the promises, and are pleased with a sweet discourse of free-grace ! Alas, these long for, and love Gospel-delicacy, as Children delight in sweet-merts : And as Dr. *Ames* saith, *Arminian grace may be but the effect of a good dinner.* Good nature working towards that which suits the fancy, but sound conviction and deep humiliation never prepared the Soul to a judicious relish of divine things, nor do they produce those blessed effects in heart and life, as in Gods Children.

Oh how many poor finners are going on in a golden dream, and fear no danger, till they be past hopes of recovery ! Many think they are travelling towards Heaven, and never question it, till as they are stepping out of this world (as they think) into Heaven, miss their footing and drop down into Hell : That never see their errour till

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till it be too late to retrieve it. Oh that men were awakened in time ! If you stay till death have struck its stroke it will be too late. [*Imparatum inveniet dies judicii, quem imparatum invenerit dies mortis.*] The day of judgment must needs find him unready, that the day of death finds unready. Men have a conceit that the interval betwixt death and judgment may do great things to make them meet for Heaven, but they are mistaken : Death launcheth you into the boundless ocean of Eternity. *It is appointed unto men once to dye, and after that the judgment.* Heb. 9. 27. Ah, Sirs, what think you ? Is there an Heaven or Hell after this life, or is there not ? And are you not certain whether you do enter by death into eternal happiness or misery, and yet can you be quiet ? If you were not loose in your belief of future things, you would

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be restless as long as you are doubtful. You owe your ease to nothing but your Lethargy. If you were not infidels you would be distracted. What Man ! The next moment may be roaring in Hell, and not repent on Earth ! He is worse then a Devil that trembles not under divine wrath. What if it have not siezed on you, as on Devils ! The flame is at next door ; wrath hangs over your heads ; the only reason you see it not, is because you are blind : The Lord open your eyes, and I need not preach terrour to you, your hearts will meditate terror : Fearfulness will surprize you hypocrites, and make you say, *Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire, with everlasting burnings ? Isa. 33. 14.* Its a wonder you do not run up and down like mad men ; surely you have taken some Opium to cast you in a dead sleep, or intoxicate

toxicate your Spirits : Or as some Malafactors do, that dare not dye sober : Yea, some wiser Heathens took great draughts of Wine, saying, *That no voluptuous person can go in his Wits into an invisible state.* But is this a making meet for Heaven or Hell ? Can rational persons think to escape the ditch by winking ? Or will men say, as its reported of *Robert Duke of Normandy, (William the Conquerours Father)* going on Pilgrimage to *Jerusalem*, falling sick, was born in a Litter on *Saracens* shoulders, and said, *He was born to Heaven on the Devils back ?* Alas, will you trust the Fiend of Hell to bring you to Heaven ? Is he grown so full of charity to Souls ? Oh forlorn case of miserable sinners ! have you no better a friend then Satan ? That you can be content to be rockt asleep in his cradle, and carried with ease to Hell, rather

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ther then ride in our Lords chariot paved with Love, to Heaven? Is security your best fence against misery? Can these poor fig-leaves of temporary Righteousness secure you from divine Vengeance? Can you be content to stand by that another day, that you dare not put to the tryal here?

Alas, I am afraid; 1. Some are ignorant fots that know not what is necessary to a meetness for Heaven. Most think if they have but time to say at death, [*Lord have mercy upon me; God forgive me my sins; Lord Jesus receive my Soul,*] they think they have made their peace with God, especially if they can say they forgive all the world, and dye in charity with all, and send for the Minister to pray with them, and receive absolution and the Sacrament, when (perhaps) they are little fit for such a solemn Ordinance; then the Mini-

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Minister recommends their Souls into Gods hands, commends them at their Funeral, and now they are certainly gone to Heaven ; these poor wretched sinners blessed their Souls whilst living, and men must praise them and account them blessed when dead. *Psal. 49. 18.*

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2. Most are inconsiderate : They consider nothing but meer objects of sense, like the kine of *Bashan*, go out at their breaches, every one at that which is before her. *Amos 4. 1, - 3.* They never mind things out of their natural sight ; they put far away the evil day, *Am. 6. 3.* little thinking what will be in the end of their sensual ways : *Jer. 5. 31.* Either they say, to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant ; *Isa. 56. 12.* or else in Atheistical scorn and mockery ; *Let us eat and drink for to morrow we dye : 1 Cor. 15. 32.* Let us be merry while we may ; we shall

H 4

never

never be younger ; when we are gone all the world is gone with us ; as if there were no reckoning or rendering day, or retribution in the other world ; but let such study *Eccl.* 11. 9, 10. *Rom.* 8. 13. *Luk.* 12. 19, 20. *Psal.* 9. 17. *2 Thess.* 1. 6, 7, 8, 9. *Job.* 3. 18. *Psal.* 50 23. Oh Sirs, disappointments are dreadful : Its sad with a witness to be confident of Heaven, and yet doomed to Hell. As *Hamilcar* dreamed he should the next night sup in *Syracusa*, which indeed he did, not as a Conqueror, (as he hoped) but as a Prisoner : Oh, how will it double your damnation, to live in confident hopes of reigning with Christ, yet to be judged by him, and banished from him for ever ! If you say *Soul take thine ease*, and God say, *Devil take his Soul* : Whether of these think you, will prevail ?

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Meetness for Heaven. 153

C H A P. XI.

An Exhortation to all persons to get meet for Heaven.

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2. **T**HE latter Use is Exhortation ; 1. To Sinners.

2. To Saints to get meet for this Heavenly Inheritance. The former by an habitual, the latter by actual meetness for this glorious state.

I shall need to say the less to move you to it ; having urged practical Reasons from our natural unmeetness, divine ordination, the design of ordinances, providences, the season of life for it, the work and priviledges here require it, the inconsistency of a contrary-frame to that glorious inheritance : Most of these are levelled to the state of un sanctified, graceless Souls, therefore I shall say the less to that branch. Oh that I had here

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the Tongue or Pen of an Angel!
The Bowels of blessed *Paul* to
perswade sinners to look after a
meetness for Heaven. Consider,

1. What else have you to do in
the world? Your very Children
will tell you that Mans chief end
is to glorifie God and enjoy him
for ever: If you attain not these
ends you live in the world to no
purpose, you are unprofitable
cumber-grounds.

2. You frustrate Christs under-
takings in the world, and do what
you can to render all his merits
useless; you tread under foot the
Son of God, count the blood of
the Covenant an unholy thing, and
despise, if not despight the spirit
of grace; *Heb. 10. 29.* you say
plainly I like not the purchase, I
will have none of it; you call
Heaven *cabul*, a dirty thing; as
Hiram called *Solomons* twenty Ci-
ties he gave him: And can you
think

ven.

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Angel! think much to be dealt without
Paul to Heaven, that thus judge your selves
after a unworthy of everlasting life? Acts
13. 46.

3. Every day sets you nearer
to do in Heaven or Hell. Its reported of
Children the Pious Lady *Falkland*, that go-
ing to bed at night, she usually
by him said, *Now am I nearer Heaven by*
not these *one day then ever I was.* One day
to no added to your time is a day taken
profitable away from your life. Oh think
under- when you have heard a Sermon,
what or spent a Sabbath, I am now near-
merits er Heaven or Hell; this word hath
not the been to me *the savour of life unto*
od of *life, or of death unto death: 2 Cor.*
, and 2. 16. It sets me forward some
spirit way; if I bring forth meet and
u say suitable fruit, I shall receive a
se, I blessing from God; if bryars and
call thorns, I am rejected, *nigh to a*
as *curse, whose end is to be burned.*
Ci- Heb. 6. 7, 8. The word either
you hardens or softens. Woe be to me,
ink if

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if all that God doth doth further
my more dreadful condemnation.

4. Eternity brings up the rear
of time. If it were but a making
fit for a days pageantry, there
would be no such great need of
curiosity to get matters ready;
though its said, *Jer. 2. 32. Can a
Maid forget her ornaments, or a
Bride her attire*; though oft it is
for the short shew of a Marriage-
day: Oh but this is for Eternity.
That curious Painter being de-
manded why he bestowed so much
labour on his Picture, answered,
[*Pingo Eternitati.*] *I paint for
Eternity.* Indeed there's nothing
of value but what relates to Eter-
nity. Eternity gives an accent and
emphasis to all created beings. The
Apostle thought all visible subluna-
ries not worth a cast of his eye in
comparison of this Eternity. *2 Cor.*
4. 18. See a Book called [*Glimpse
of Eternity, on that Text.*] Alas,
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Meekness for Heaven. 157

Sirs, is Eternity nothing with you?
Oh my Friends, this (if any thing)
is worth preparing for, to be for
ever with the Lord, to injoy God
ten thousands of millions of years,
or to be banished from his pre-
sence, and be tormented with De-
vils and damned Souls for ever.
Oh this word for ever is amazing.
A godly man in company late in a
deep muse, and being demanded
what he was thinking of? Answer-
ed, only with repeating [*for ever,*
for ever, for ever,] for a quarter
of an hour together : This is in-
deed a confounding consideration.
Oh that you would solemnly lay
upon your hearts the great things
of another world ! On the one
hand the injoyment of God, Christ,
the company of Saints, Angels,
the perfection of your natures, a
crown of glory, fulness of joy and
pleasures at Gods right-hand for
evermore, through the perpetual
Ages.

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Ages of a boundless Eternity : This were worth praying, groaning, obeying, suffering for a thousand years, to get ready for, and possessions of at last. On the other hand, to think of the sting of Conscience, the company of Devils and damned Souls, the loss of God, Christ, Heaven, your precious Souls, the burning Lake, the bottomless Pit, the scorching Flames, and this for ever and ever, an endless duration. Oh Sirs, if you should but look down into that stupendous gulf, what a change would it work in your hearts ? You would banish your vain company, lay aside your worldly business, cast off your sensual pleasures, and mind nothing else till your Souls be secured to all Eternity. This would be as the cry at midnight, *Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye forth to meet him.* *Matth. 25. 6.* As sleepy as they were

Meelness for Heaven. 159

were this startled them ; so it would you, as if you heard a voice as out of the Clouds ; Sinner thou art now summoned to appear before the dreadful tribunal of the allseeing Judge, to receive thy final sentence, and to be sent to an everlasting state of weal or woe ; stay not one moment in thy state of unregeneracy ; hast, hast, yea make post-hast out of it ; fall to the work of Faith and Repentance as for thy life ; defer not one day ; now or never.

You'l say, can I make my self meet for Heaven ? What can I do ? The work is Gods. I answer, God is the efficient, but he will make you instruments in this work. Gods grace and Mans duty are very consistent. Study *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. Up and be doing, and God will be with you. Though God must turn, yet you must endeavour to turn your selves. *Ezek.*

18. 30, 31. Though God make you a new heart, yet he will have you make you a new heart. Oh Sirs, fall close to the work, examine, prove, try your states by the rule of the Word ; attend the most piercing, powerful Ministry ; search out all your iniquities, and confess them before the Lord with grief, hatred and shame ; beg converting grace as for your lives ; plead with God for pardon through the Blood of Christ ; solemnly renew your Paptismal Covenant in taking God for your God, and giving up your selves to him, and then read, meditate, watch and pray, mortifie your beloved lusts, obey the commands of God, and do these things speedily, seriously and constantly, and see what the effect will be. If you will fall to it, well and good, if not, you are guilty of self-murder ; and remember you are this day warned.

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2. I turn me to truly gracious Souls that are in a safe state for the main, as to habitual meetness, but I fear are far short of that actual meetness that is requisite, as to a lively exercise of suitable graces ; clear evidence of spiritual state ; dispatching work off their hands ; being mortified to time, and longing for Heaven. Alas, the wise Virgins slumbered and slept. I fear few of us are in that readiness we ought to be in, might have been in, or that others have attained to ; nay, its well if now our Souls be in that frame that sometimes we have been in : What decays of love, zeal, tenderness ; what backslidings, deadness, hardness, worldliness, formality do Gods Children fall into ? What staggerings in our Faith of the reality of unseen things ? How uncertain about our Title to this Inheritance ? Doth not our slavish
fear

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fear of death shew thee? Our instability and variable motions in Religion; our distractions in holy duties; our frequent closing with temptations, and too oft stepping aside into sin; our intermitting duties of Gods worship, and strangeness growing betwixt God and our Souls; our unreadiness in our accounts; our unwillingness to go to God: All these too sadly demonstrate our unmeetness for Heaven. Alas Friends, are we not yet meet! Let us be ashamed of our slackness; what have we been doing with all that time, these helps and priviledges we have had? Have not many young ones and others out-strippt us, and are got to Heaven, that set out after us? Are we not ashamed of our loytering and lagging behind? What's become of the many warnings we have had in our selves and others? Have we any greater matters

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matters to mind? Do we not bring dishonour to God, and discredit to our Religion by our backwardness? And can we have that comfort and confidence in meeting the Bridegroom of our Souls as is fit? Alas, our Lord will be less welcome if he surprize us unawares, as I have told you. Ah Sirs, you little know how near death is, and therefore should be always ready to meet our Lord. It is matter of great lamentation that so few of Gods Children are meet for their home; and like wayward Children are loath to go to bed, though God hath taken a course to weary us out of the world. The Lord help us to lament and lay to heart our great unmeetness for Heaven. When sin, security, senselesness, steals in upon thy Spirit, search it out, mourn for it, confess it, beg a pardon of it, and

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and recover thy self quickly out of it ; be not satisfied with any distance from God ; recover thy wonted familiarity with thy best friend, and mend thy pace towards Heaven, as a man in his journey that hath been hindered, hies the faster, to recover his way, lost by his stay ; breath after more likeness to God, fitness for every dispensation, and long to be with God in Heaven. Alas Sirs, you little know how near you are to Eternity. You see the sands that are run to the nether end of the glass, but the upper part (as one saith) is covered with a mantle, you know not how few sands are yet to run. God forbid that you should have your Evidences to procure, when you should have them to produce. If you be not sure of Heaven, you are sure of nothing, all worldly things must leave you, or you must leave them.

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them. Dispatch all, but this, off your hands, and be as the bird on her wings to her nest, or the traveller, whose mind is still on home, home, nothing will please him but home. Say with Calvin, [*Usquequo Domine?*] *How long Lord, shall my Soul be at a distance from thee? Come Lord Jesus, come quickly.*

C H A P. XII.

The second Doctrine briefly handled, that a meetness for Heaven is a mercy worth thanking God for.

I Proceed briefly to explain the second Doctrine in my Text, which is,

*That its a transcendent Mercy worth thanking God for, to
be*

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be made meet for the Heavenly Inheritance.

If we must thank God for Daily-bread, for Houses, Health, Estates, Worldly comforts and accommodations for our Bodies, how much more should we thank God for Heaven, and a meetness for Heaven? without which we shall never come there.

The truth of this I shall demonstrate in these seven particulars.

1. Spiritual Mercies are of most worth, and deserve most thanks from us to God: But this is a Spiritual Mercy, *Eph. 1. 3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all Spiritual Blessings in Heavenly places in Christ.* It is [*ἐν τοῖς ἰπνευματικοῖς,*] and so may signifie spiritual things as well as places; *i. e.* Graces, Priviledges, Comforts,

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forts, or whatever hath a tendency to the good of the Soul, or eternal Salvation in Heaven : These indeed are a *Benjamins* portion, a goodly heritage, the quintessence and marrow of all Blessings. If God should give you the whole World, and put you off therewith, you are cursed and wretched ; if he give you Grace and Glory, you are happy, if you had nothing else. Our Lord thought that a plenary Benediction, (with which he begins his first Sermon) *Matth. 5. 3. Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God.* There's the mercy promised, and the qualification for it, both choice Blessings.

2. That which is the purchase of Christ is worth our thanking God for ; but this is the fruit of Christs purchase : Its not only a purchased inheritance, nor did Christ only purchase us to be heirs of
of

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of this inheritance, but he hath purchased a meetness in Believers for that Inheritance. *Tit. 2. 14. Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* How do men thankfully celebrate Christs Nativity? But that mercy of Christs being born into the world, (though transcendently great) will never advantage you, unless *Christ be in you, the hope of glory, Col. 1. 27.* his dwelling in your hearts by Faith, *Eph. 3. 17.* intitles you to the inheritance he hath purchased. Look within thee Man, as well as without thee, and above thee, for the fruits of Christs purchase, and occasions of thankfulness to God.

3. The operations and fruits of the Spirit are surely worth thanking God for; but this is one of the most glorious fruits of the Spirit,

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Spirit, to fit Souls for Heaven. Our Lord promiseth to send the Holy Ghost to supply the want of his Bodily presence, and it is the richest gift that ever proceeded from Father and Son ; such as have it, *out of their Belly flow Rivers of living water, Joh. 7. 38, 39.* God is to be admired in all the saving works and actings of the Spirit, the convincing, humbling, sanctifying, supporting, satisfying, sealing, comforting, quickening, enlarging, confirming, witnessing, and reviving operations of it. Alas, we had never lookt after God, had not the Holy Ghost knockt at our doors ; we had been blind in the things of God, but that the Spirit inlightened us ; dead but that the Spirit enlivened us ; we had wandered for ever, but that the Holy Spirit reduced us , our hearts had
I been

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been for ever hardened from Gods fear, had not Gods Spirits softened us ; we should have been unlike God, but that the Holy Ghost stampt Gods Image upon us ; whatever hath been done upon our Spirits to fit us for Heaven, the Holy Ghost hath been the Agent ; yea, that Spirit that we have quenched, grieved, resisted, vexed ; what cause then have we to be very thankful ? This is the golden Oyl, that runs through the golden pipes of Ordinances into the candlestick of the Church. *Zeck. 4. 11, 12.*

4. The Gospel-dispensation is great matter and ground of thankfulness : *It is a mystery which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men : Eph. 3. 4, 5.* But what is the marrow and main design of this Gospel-revelation ? Why, *ver. 6. That the Gentiles should*

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should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel. Oh glorious design ! Oh blessed Charter ! But what are we better unless we be partners of this privilege ? Therefore chap. 2. 19. faith, *Christians are fellow-citizens with the Saints.* This is the Gospel way of infranchising and incorporating poor strangers in the Immunities of Heaven, and surely this is worth thanking God for. The Charters of some Cities cost them dear, and the Chief Captain said to Paul, *with a great summe obtained I this freedom ;* Paul said, [and so may Believers say in this sense,] *but I was free-born.* Acts 22. 28. Though it cost Christ dear, yet it costs us nothing, but reception. This new Jerusalem is built all of Free-stone, and shall not our shoutings echo,
I 2 grace,

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grace, grace to the Head-stone, Jesus Christ? *Zech. 4. 7.* Especially since our freedom rescues us from Hellish tortures, as *Pauls* did him from scourging; and makes us heirs of Heaven.

5. Peculiar advantages not afforded to all, gives grounds of thankfulness; such is this. Our Lord said, *Matth. 11. 25, 26.* *I thank thee O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.* Alas what have any of us, but what we have received? Discriminating kindnesses call for the greatest gratitude: What did God see in any of us that might procure for us Heaven? Or within us what preparation for Heaven? You and I are of the same polluted lump of Mankind as others: Most unlikely
ly

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ly to become heirs of such a glorious inheritance as Heaven is. What could God see in us to attract his heart to us? Nay, what did he not see in us to turn his stomach against us? It was the kindness and love of God our Saviour: *Not by works of Righteousness which we had done, but according to his Mercy he saved us.* Tit. 3. 3, 4. Alas, what loveliness could God see or foresee in us to make us Children, then heirs of God, joynt-heirs with Christ? We may say with honest Judas, *Joh. 14. 22. How is it that thou wilt manifest thy self to us, and not unto the world?* It must be answered, *Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.* When thousands are left, why art thou taken? How came it to pass that when Philosophers and wise Sages of the World,

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bewildred so in the dark about felicity, that God should shew you the right way to true happiness, and lead you into it, and in it ? Surely all is of free grace.

6. Fittedness to any duty or dispensation is a Mercy worth thanking God for : Such is the Christian frame that makes meet for Heaven ; such a person is fit to do Gods will, or suffer Gods will ; he is suited to a prosperous and adverse condition ; his foot standeth in an even place ; like a Watch in a Mans pocket, turn it this way or that way, it keeps its motion ; so the Christian in all conditions, his station and motion Heaven-wards. *The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger. Job 17. 9.* He is [*utring; paratus*] ready for any thing that God calls him to : Like the man
of

Meetness for Heaven. 175

of God mentioned, 2. Tim. 3. 17. *That is perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.* Oh what a blessed thing is it to be in a capacity to embrace a motion to pray, read, confer, meditate, receive the Lords Supper upon an invitation from Men, or summons from God ! The Church in *Cant.* 5. 2. found the want of this, when she saith, *I sleep, but my heart waketh ; i. e.* I have the principle, but want the exercise of grace ; and alas, how unready was she to entertain her beloved, though she had given him a call ; and the sad consequences of this unfit frame are obvious, both as to her sin and suffering : But oh what a mercy is it to have an heart ready pressed for Gods service ! Give God the glory of it, and its worth something to be in a readiness for Mercy, Affliction, I. 4. Death,

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Death, Judgment, as those are that are meet for Heaven. It was a noble Speech of *Basil*, when *Modestus* the Præfect threatened Confiscation, Torments, Banishment; he answered, *He need not fear Confiscation that hath nothing to lose; nor Banishment to whom Heaven only is a Countrey; nor Torments, when his Body would be dasht with one blow; nor Death, which is the only way to set him at liberty.* Polycarp was ready for Beasts, or any kind of death, for he was ready for Heaven: For as this Christian is delivered from danger by death, so from the fear of death. *Heb. 2. 15.* Death it self is the day break of eternal brightness to the Child of God; and is not this worth thanking God for?

7. Heaven is surely worth thanking God for. Could we get a glimpse

Meetness for Heaven. 177.

a glimpse of that state and place of glory, and this inheritance of the Saints in light, together with our title to it ; Oh how would it dazzle and transport us ! its said that the Temple of *Diana* was so bright, that the Door-keeper still cryed to such as entered, *Take heed to your Eyes* : Much more may we say so of the surprizing glory of the Heaven of Heavens ; and therefore our Lord saith, *None can see his face and live* : But death blows dust out of the Eyes of glorified Saints, and the Morning-Star at the Resurrection doth so fortifie the sight, that it can behold this inaccessible light with admiration ; even as all the Stars look upon the Sun. *Fear not little flock*, saith our Saviour, *Luk. 12. 32. for it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the Kingdom.* Is not a Kingdom
I s worth

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worth thanks, and such a Kingdom; and to have this freely of gift, not to wade to it through Wars and Blood, and all this by hereditary right, which is the clearest title. Oh Sirs, do you know what Heaven is? It is the immediate injoyment of God, an immunity from all evils, a possession of all good, the perfection of our natures, the maturity of our graces, the destruction of all sin, the banishment of Satan and his temptations, the fulness of joy, and total death of all grief. Indeed it is such a state as can neither be expressed nor conceived. How vile and contemptible would all things below appear to one that with *Paul*, is rapt up into this Paradise! I read of one *Adrianus* an Heathen, that was present when Martyrs were examined and tormented, he asked,
What

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What was the Reason they suffered such Tortures ; it was answered in the words of that Text, 1 Cor. 2. 9. Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him : The very rehearsal of which words converted this *Adrianns*, and he became a Martyr also. Oh what a transcendent reward is there in these Mansions above ! And God doth not grudge us the knowledge of these glorious things. He is not like some rich men that will not let their heirs know, what they will do for them, till they dye ; no, the Text saith, ver. 10. that God revealeth them to us by his Spirit ; and v. 12. that we may know the things freely given to us of God. We may know them perceptively, not comprehensively ; by Faith tho-
not

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not by Sense. We know but yet in part, [*non rem sed aliquid rei*] but then we shall know as we are known ; [not as God knoweth us ; for our knowledge and Gods must not be so comparatively likened, but] as holy Spirits know us both now and for ever, we shall both know and be known by immediate intuition ; yet in this world God gives his Children (though differently) some glimpses and dark representations, [*per Species*, as through a glass] by Metaphors or Parables, and this discovery is to raise up our hearts in thankfulness, admiration and longing desires to be above with God.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIII.

*Some practical Inferences from
this Doctrine.*

USE of all this briefly is in
four conspectories.

I. That there is undoubtedly
such a future state as bliss and
blessedness for Gods' Children af-
ter this life. *There remaineth a
rest to the people of God. Heb.*

4. 9. I need not go about to
prove this, its sufficiently and a-
bundantly confirmed by abler
hands; not only from Scripture,
but Nature, Reason, Divine Pro-
vidence in the world, and the
grace of God in the hearts of his
people. Enough is said to silence
Atheism in our Spirits, and to
stop the mouths of all Atheists on
Earth. Can any rationally ima-
gine that God should endow Man
with

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with such a noble Soul, and endue that Soul with such noble faculties of Mind, Will, and Conscience, and Affections, capable of knowing, loving, injoying God, with fears and hopes of a future state, and all this in vain? Can we think the holy, just, good, wise, righteous God will always promote the wicked and punish the godly, and not right these things in the next world? Hath Christ come into the world to no purpose? What would become of his Birth, Life, Doctrine, Death, Resurrection, Ascension, Intercession, coming to Judgment if there were no life of future retribution? What would become of the precepts, promises, threatenings, motives, means, helps to an holy life here, and to attain eternal life hereafter, if there were no such thing? Can we
 imagine

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imagine that the great God governs the world by a lye. Are Heaven and Hell bug-bears, or meer imaginations of brain-sick fools? Is there not a reality in Satans temptations, to draw or drive us from God and future happiness? Or are there no Devils or Spirits, and so by consequence no God? Away with these wild conceits, contrary to the sentiments of all Mankind.

2. Then it follows that assurance is attainable; not only objective assurance, that there is a glorious inheritance, and that God will give it to some; but subjective also, that this is mine, that its for me; I have a title to it; else how could persons thank God for making meet for this inheritance. This assurance ariseth from actings of Faith, and produceth rejoycing in hope of this glory of
God.

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God. *Rom. 5. 1.* The gospel is a gospel of peace, not of fears and doubts. Assurance may be had, not only by divine revelation, but in the use of ordinary means. *I know in whom I have believed. 2 Tim. 1. 12.* Read on, and you'll find not only his assurance of his present state, but his perseverance and future felicity; and its not his peculiar privilege, but common to other Believers. *2 Cor. 5. 1.* Its true God is a free Agent, and may bestow it on whom, and when he pleaseth: Some have it most clearly at first Conversion; as *Bernard* for a time after his Conversion, remained, as it were, deprived of his Senses, by the excessive consolations he had from God. *Cyprian* saith, *He thought before his Conversion, it was impossible to find such raptures and ravishments*
as

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as now he found in a Christian course. Many a close-walking Christian can set his seal to this truth ; only it ordinarily comes in after hard conflicts, with temptation, wrestlings with God, much experience, and exact walking with God : There is Salvation and there is the joy of Gods Salvation. *Psal. 51. 12. This (saith Mr. Latimer) is the sweet-meats of the feast of a good Conscience.* There are many other dainty dishes at the feast, but this is the banquet : This is better felt then expressed ; but must be endeavoured after, prayed for : *Ask, saith our Lord, and ye shall receive that your joy may be full. Joh. 16. 24.*

3. That the work of thankfulness is the great duty of a Christian. This, this is the proper character and imployment of a
Chri-

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Christian. God commands it, privileges call for it, gracious Souls have been much in it; it is comprehensive of mans whole duty. *Ursin* entitles the practical part of his Catechism [*de Gratitude*] of *Gratitude*. Oh that Christians were more in it! Praise is comely for the upright. This is the Epitome of Religion, the Emblem of Heaven, the proper Air in which a Christian breaths: Its most acceptable to God, creditable to Religion, and profitable to the Christian. Mr. Fox tells us, the City *Zurick* ingraven the Year of their deliverance from Popery upon Pillars, in Letters of Gold, for a lasting Memorial: And have not Christians cause to thank God for grace and glory? The Heathens could say, *Call a Man ingrateful, and you cannot call him worse.* *Hezekiah* brought

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brought wrath on himself, *Judah* and *Jerusalem*, for not rendring to the Lord according to benefits done to him. *2 Chron.* 32. 25. Oh Sirs, you little know what an evil ingratitude is; you fill your Souls with guilt; you too much resemble wicked men whose character is unthankful: *2 Tim.* 3. 2. That sin makes hard times; yea, it makes you like the worst of Heathen, for which sin God gave them up; *Rom.* 1. 21, 24. you act disingenuously, as those that have served their turns of God, and then disown him. How can you own God in the next strait, that are so much in arrears? Will not your mouth be stopt, and Conscience fly in your face? Do you not daily depend on God for new Mercies? And is not thankfulness a natural duty? Is not gratitude for Spiritual Mercies,

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cies, a great evidence of your interest in them? And is not every Mercy sweetened by thankfulness? Nay is not this a mean to continue them? The more thankful any have been the more eminent they have been: Their graces have shined and glistered like Pearls and Diamonds. Yea once more, the more thankful you are, and the more cause of thankfulness you will both have and see. Thankfulness for what you are sure you have, will produce a fuller evidence of that you are doubtful of. The Lord humble us for our gross ingratitude; which is (as one saith) a Monster in Nature, a Solæcism in Manners, a Paradox in Divinity, and a parching Wind to damme up the Fountain of Divine Favours.

You'll say, Oh Sir, I could be thankful with all my heart, if I
knew

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knew I were fit for Heaven, and that my Soul shall at death enter into peace ; but alas, as long as I am doubtful and at uncertainties, how can I be thankful ? Conscience would check and condemn me ; and indeed I have more cause to be humbled and ashamed for my unmeetness, then thankful for any meetness I find in me for Heaven.

Ans. 1. There may be grounds both of humiliation and thankfulness in the same soul and subject. Let the best Saints do the best they can, and attain to the highest pitch imaginable, they shall have cause of humiliation for their defects.

2. Holy jealousy, fears, cares, do well in Gods Children, to keep them humble ; and indeed, as grace increaseth, sight of imperfections increaseth, and sense of
thor-

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short-coming; the more discoveries of Gods holiness, the viler will the Christian be in his own eyes; as *Job* and *Isaiah*, *Job* 42. *Isa.* 6. 5. and the humbler the Soul is the fitter for God. *Isa.* 57. 15. and 66. 2. Thank God for that humility.

3. You may and must be thankful for the Mercies which you have, and cannot deny but God hath vouchsafed: You have your lives for a prey; are out of Hell, which is more then you deserve; you have abundant outward Mercies, do not these deserve thankfulness? Yea, Christ hath purchased grace and glory for some; nay further, he hath put thousands into possession of this inheritance, and should not this make you thankful? Yea further, Heaven is offered to you, and you are under the means of grace,
and

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and in a possibility of obtaining this happiness, which Devils and damned Souls are not ; and is not this ground of thankfulness?

4. Be sure you keep in mind the distinction of habitual and actual meetness for Heaven : If you have not the former, either relative or real, be not adopted or justified, are neither converted, nor covenanted with God, I say, the Lord have mercy on you, your case is doleful ; you have great cause of lamentation. Oh man, I am not now speaking to thee ; *Be afflicted and mourn, let your laughter be turned into mourning, your joy to heaviness. Jam. 4. 9.* Yea, you graceless rich men, weep and howl, for your miseries that shall come upon you. *Jam. 5. 1.* I have not a word of comfort from the Lord to you. Your earthly inheritances shall be taken

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taken from you, and you shall be thrust into the dungeon of Hell. You may for a while kindle a fire, and walk warm in the sparks you have kindled, but, saith God, *this shall you have of mine hand, ye shall lye down in sorrow, Isa. 50. 11.* Stand you by while the Saints take comfort in their portion. Read *Isa. 65. 13, 14, 15.*

It is to you the heirs of promise, to whom I am now speaking, and bear you this in mind, that its one thing to have right to this inheritance, another to know you have right. Many a gracious Soul is much in the dark about its relation, yet its state safe for the main. What sayest thou? Hast thou not the things that accompany Salvation? *Heb. 6. 9.* Hath not God been dealing with thy heart, as he useth to deal with such as he designs for Heaven? Hast

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Hast thou not seen thy woful state by Nature ? The necessity of Christ and grace ? Hast thou not experienced a change from Nature to Grace, from Death to Life ? Hath not this new birth cost thee griefs and groans, prayers and tears ? Dost thou not delight now in what thou didst disdain ? Is not thy principle, rule, end, otherwise then formerly ? Hast thou not changed thy company, courses, manner of life ? Speak out man, belye not thy self, deny not Gods grace ; something like grace thou seeest in thy self, and to be sure Satan and World oppose it, and man and thy self could not work it. It is of God, a seed sown by the hand of omnipotency. *And he that hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.* Phil. 1, 6.

K

As

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As to actual meetness for Heaven, I refer you to what hath been laid down before ; look it over , deal impartially ; see if your experience do not answer those heads ; hath not God helped you in the exercise of the graces of Faith, Hope, Love, Humility ? Hath not God given you some grounded evidence of sincerity, by diligence in duty, reflection on your state, appealing to God, and pleading with God for the Spirits sealings ? Hath not God helpt you to be dispatching your work off your hands, Spiritual, Temporal, Relative and Publick ? Are you not much mortified to corruption, worldly injoyments, and have you not spiritualized earthly things, and got more intimate familiarity with God ? What say you to these things ? Do not your hearts eccho
back,

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back, with your [*probatum est*] setting your seal to these things? I have not time nor room to enlarge further; but I would have you diligently compare your selves now with what you were some years ago. Is not your Repentance more Evangelical? Doth not the sense of divine love extort from you more tears of godly sorrow, and more vehement hatred of all sin, purely it is offensive to God? Hath not your Faith been more vigorous in its actings upon your dear Lord? In closing more fully with promises? Have you not been more frequent and serious in renewing your Covenant with God? And have not such dayes and duties been solemn heart-melting opportunities? Have you not been more constant and enlarged in the duty of secret Prayer, with shorter intermissions

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and more favouriness ? Do you spend your time better then formerly ? Do you fill up every vacancy with some useful business for Earth or Heaven ? Have you not more incomes of grace and assistance in duties both as to matter and manner ? To knit your minds, and raise your affections to God, and sometimes suggest words to you ? Do you not more concern your selves for the Souls of Relations and others in Prayer and Discourse ? being more weighted with the necessity of their Conversion ? Are you not more endeared to Saints as Saints, though poor, or disobliging, and of a different perswasion ? Have you not got power over your Passions, to regulate them ? And if you feel unruly motions, can you pray them down, and through grace calm them ? Can you ~~not~~ put up injuries

injuries and affronts; and not only so as not to revenge and forgive, but pray more heartily for the repentance and remission of such as are most malicious against you? Is it not more the grief of thy heart when God is dishonoured, his Spirit grieved, his Gospel reproached by the sins of profane or professors? If thou think any body is offended by thee, is it not more a real trouble to thee then formerly? And thou canst not be quiet till thou seekest Reconciliation? And if thou be conscious of giving them just occasion, thou confessest thy fault and humblest thy self to them? Hast thou not learned more faithfully and discreetly to manage the duty of private admonition of an offending Christian? Drawing out bowels of compassion for and to such as are fallen? Do not publick con-

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cerns of Church or Nation lye nearer thy heart daily? Canst thou not more rejoyce in the gifts, graces, holiness, usefulness of others, though it obscure thine? Art thou not more glad when corruptions are mortified then gratified? When occasions of sinning are removed, rather then afforded, though it cost thee dear? Dost thou not more sensibly understand the sweet life of faith in temporals? Committing all to God, thou findest provisions have been strangely made? Are not thy affections more spiritualized towards dearest Relations? Dost thou not love them in the Lord, and the Lord in them, and canst freely part with them upon Gods call? Art thou not more taken up with Gods Mercies, to give him the glory of them, then any personal content thou hast in them?

Is

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Is not thy heart daily more weary of the world, and longing for Heaven? Yet after all this canst thou not say, thou art nothing, deservest nothing but Hell? And if God glorifie his Justice in thy confusion, thy mouth is stopped, and thou must justifie him for ever with flames about thine Eares? Dost thou not account thy self the greatest of Sinners, least of Saints, and by the grace of God thou art what thou art? And this thou canst truly say, that God is more thy exceeding joy, and Christ more precious to thy Soul then ever?

Canst thou in thy sober, solid, settled frame, answer these questions, thy state is safe and sweet, and thou art meet for Heaven; yet not so meet, but still breathing after more meetness, till thy last gasp of breath; for no man

on

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on this side death was ever meet
enough, and all must be ascribed
to grace, grace in the foundation,
grace in the topstone : I shall con-
clude all with a part of a Poem
in Mr. Herbert, called *Grace* ;
P. 52.

*Death is still working like a Mole,
And digs my Grave at each re-
move :*

*Let Grace work too, and on my Soul,
Drop from above.*

*Sin is still hammering my heart
Unto an hardness void of love ;
Let suppling Grace to cross his art,
Drop from above.*

*O come ! for thou dost know the way,
Or if to me thou wilt not move ;
Remove me where I need not say,
Drop from above.*

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2 Cor. 5. 8. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Amen.

F I N I S.

Some Books to be Sold by *Thomas Parkhurst*, at the Bible and Three Crowns in *Cheapside*.

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